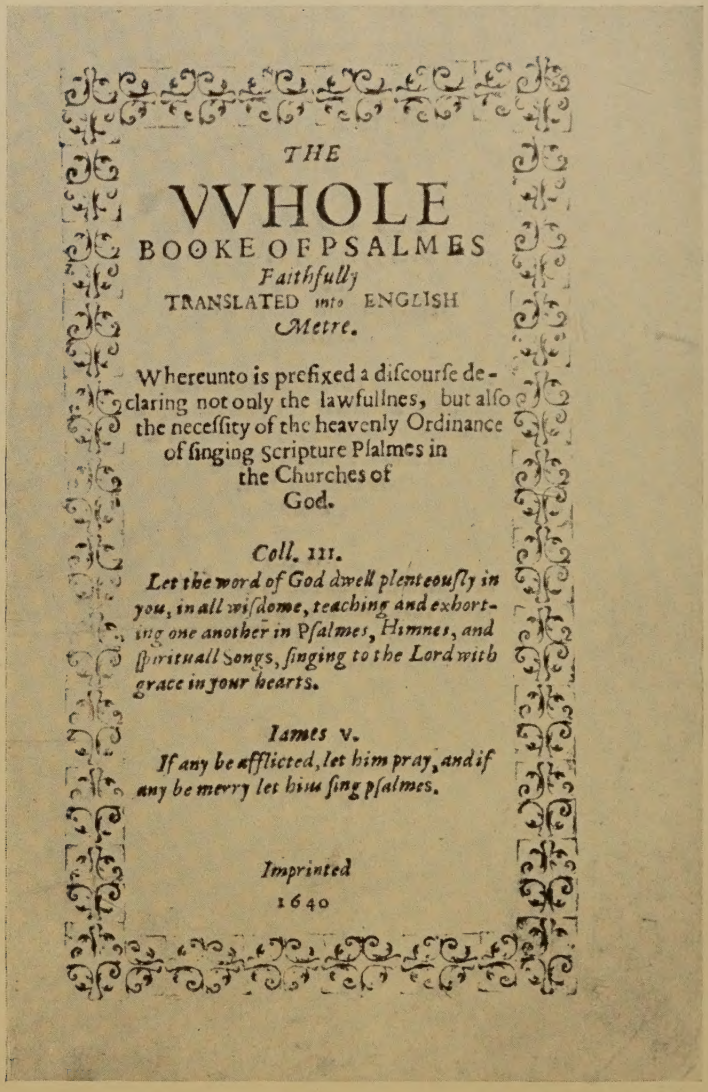
THE STORY of the AMERICAN HYMN

By

EDWARD S. NINDE

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

GEORGE WHITEFIELD: PROPHET-PREACHER


THE

VVHOLE

BOOKE OF PSALMES

Faithfully

TRANSLATED *into* ENGLISH

Metre.

Whereunto is prefixed a diſcourſe declaring not only the lawfullnes, but alſo the neceſſity of the heavenly Ordinance of ſinging Scripture Pſalmes in the Churches of God.

Coll. III.

Let the word of God dwell plenteouſly in you, in all wiſdome, teaching and exhorting one another in Pſalmes, Himnes, and ſpirituall Songs, ſinging to the Lord with grace in your hearts.

Iames V.

If any be afflicted, let him pray, and if any be merry let him ſing pſalmes.

Imprinted

1640

TITLE-PAGE OF THE BAY PSALM BOOK OF 1640

The Story of the American Hymn

BY

EDWARD S. NINDE

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TO MY SISTER

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PREFACE

The following narrative covers a period of three centuries, from the coming of the Pilgrim Fathers to these western shores down to our own times. It is scarcely more than a hundred years since hymn-writing in earnest began in America. In early colonial days the Psalms were used exclusively in religious song, and when hymns were introduced they were nearly all from the pen of Isaac Watts. But American hymnody cannot be understood without reference to the long period of psalmody which preceded it. The one has its roots in the other.

This story of the American hymn, therefore, goes back to the beginning, to the Bay Psalm Book, which, during its remarkable career, exerted such a profound influence on New England worship, and then to the later Psalm Books, "accommodated" to American needs. It traces the gradual movement toward the use of hymns and describes the pioneer efforts in hymn-writing. From this point, our American hymn authors and their works are taken up individually, following the chronological order. Thus an attempt is made in a series of connected pictures to give a general view of the American hymn in the various stages of its development.

The list of writers is not exhaustive, but it is believed that no composer of hymns of a standard type in general use at the present time has been omitted. The biographical sketches are designedly fragmentary, and are pursued only so far as to provide a suitable background for the study of the hymns, and to furnish such information as will aid in their understanding.

I am deeply grateful for many courtesies received from the custodians of the Public Libraries in Boston and New York, of the Harvard and Andover Libraries, of the Library of the Union Theological Seminary, and of various Philadelphia Libraries, especially that of the Presbyterian Historical Society. I have been given access to priceless hymnological collections with unstinted generosity. I would also express my peculiar indebtedness to that monumental work, *The English Hymn,* by Dr. Louis F. Benson, for inspiration as well as information.

EDWARD S. NINDE.

Germantown, Philadelphia.

CHAPTER I

THE BAY PSALM BOOK

"Being thus . . . brought safe to land; they fell upon their knees and blessed the GOD of heaven, who had brought them over the vast and furious ocean, and delivered them from all the perils and miseries thereof."

Thus wrote Governor Bradford, in telling the story of how he and his fellow pilgrims in the Mayflower found a refuge on these western shores. The little book of devotion which they brought with them to their new home, and from which they sang praises to "the God of heaven" during the long and stormy voyage, bore the title: "The Booke of Psalms: Englished both in Prose and Metre." It had been published at Amsterdam in 1612, by Henry Ainsworth, an English clergyman who had separated from the Church of England, and who for a number of years had been living in exile. Most of the company that came over in the Mayflower were likewise Separatists who had fled to Holland for safety, and naturally they brought with them the Psalms which had been prepared by their fellow exile.

They held this small book in tender affection

and were loath to exchange it for a new version. In Plymouth, where it was first used, it was retained for more than two generations. Among the village maidens doubtless there was more than one Priscilla whom a John Alden might have found in meditation while "Open wide on her lap lay the well-worn psalm-book of Ainsworth."

On the other hand, the Puritans who crossed in the great migration of 1630, and founded Boston, came direct from England. While they deplored the corruptions of the Established Church, they hoped for reform from within, and had continued their membership in the historic fold, looking askance upon the Separatists. They brought with them the version of the Psalms by Sternhold and Hopkins. This version had been in general use in the homeland for many years and continued to be for years to come, yet at no time did it give anything like complete satisfaction. The metrical renderings were in many cases utterly wretched. Samuel Wesley, father of John, referred to them in disgust as "scandalous doggerel." But what gave particular offense to the stricter Puritans was the fact that the translation from the Hebrew was so free and easy that in some cases it was regarded as a positive misrepresentation of the sacred writers. There were those who caustically referred to this current

version as "Hopkins his Jigges." The dissatisfaction was especially pronounced among the Puritans who came to New England, and it was soon determined to prepare an entirely new Psalm Book whose chief merit should be its close adherence to the Hebrew original.

The work began about 1636, and there was no lack of scholars to undertake the task. Nothing could better illustrate the high standard of intelligence in that company of early Puritans than the fact that already among them were thirty clergymen, all of them "pious and learned ministers," university-trained and able to handle the Scriptures in the original tongues. A portion of the work was supposed to be assigned to each of the thirty, but the bulk of it seems to have been committed to those three worthy scholars: Richard Mather, minister of the Church of Dorchester; Thomas Welde, and John Eliot, associate ministers of the church in Roxbury, Eliot afterward becoming known to fame as apostle to the Indians.

In the meantime, while the work was in progress, a printing press, or "printery," as it was called, was brought over from England and set up in the house of President Dunster, head of the recently founded Harvard College. This was at the time that Governor Berkeley, of Virginia, fearful lest learning might breed all manner of

heresies, was exclaiming, "Thank God! there are no free schools nor printing presses [in Virginia], and I hope there will be none for one hundred years."

On the other hand, the New England colonists were very glad when they learned that their worthy friend, Joseph Glover, a dissenting clergyman in England, possessing considerable means, had contributed of his own funds and had gathered enough from others to purchase a press and type; that he had engaged an experienced printer, Stephen Daye, and that the Glover and Daye families, accompanied by three men helpers, had embarked for Boston. But the old chronicle adds the sad item that Mr. Glover fell ill "of a feaver" and "died on the sea hitherward." However, in due course of time, President Dunster married the widow and received her and the printery into his own home. Here it was that the Bay Psalm Book was printed in 1640, a year memorable in our colonial history as witnessing the appearance of the first book printed in British America, and also as marking the birth of American psalmody.

An edition of seventeen hundred copies was issued, a large number considering the slim population of those days, and showing the perfect faith that was felt in the undertaking. The records tell us that the cost of the paper was £29,

and of the typesetting and printing, £33. The book sold for twenty pence, and the total receipts were a little over £141, leaving a handsome profit. It should be remembered that money then was worth several times what it is now. It is interesting to know that the printer was liberally rewarded, as we learn from this item: "Att a General Court held at Boston on the eighth day of the eighth moneth 1641, Steeven Daye being the first that sett upon printing, is graunted three hundred acres of land, where it may be convenient without prejudice to any town."

One of the most interesting parts of this book is the preface, written by Richard Mather, and no doubt expressing the convictions of the other ministers. He takes up the various questions then being discussed:

"First. what psalmes are to be sung in Churches? whether David's and other scripture psalmes, or the psalmes invented by the gifts of godly men in every age of the church. Secondly, if scripture psalmes, whether in their owne words, or in such meter as english poetry is wont to run in? Thirdly by whom are they to be sung? whether by the whole churches together with their voices? or by one man singing alone and the rest joyning in silence and in the close saying amen." These questions were under vigorous

debate in the colony, and there were sharp differences of belief. But Richard Mather contended, and his views were generally accepted, that David's Psalms, in English form, should be sung, and by all the people. In a subsequent chapter we shall have occasion to refer again to this very live controversy.

Of the poetical qualities of the Bay Psalm Book, one is loath to speak. Excepting half a dozen Psalms rendered into English verse by Francis Quarles, the poet, and sent over from England, all the work was done on this side. Of the piety of the Puritan translators there can be no question. They were likewise men of education—Cambridge graduates. But poets they were not. Moreover, the very purpose in view was to produce a version which should follow as closely as possible the Hebrew original. The Preface concludes thus: "If therefore the verses are not always so smooth and elegant as some may desire or expect; let them consider that God's Altar needs not our pollishings: Ex. 20. for wee have respected rather a plaine translation, than to smooth our verses with the sweetness of any paraphrase, and soe have attended Conscience rather than Elegance, fidelity rather than poetry, in translating the hebrew words into english language, and David's poetry into english meetre:

that soe wee may sing in Sion the Lords
songs of praise according to his own
will; untill hee take us from hence,
and wipe away all our tears, &
bid us enter into our masters
joye to sing eternall
Halleluiahs."

Bound thus to the very words of Scripture, it is unlikely that they would have ventured to exercise poetic talents even had they possessed them. It is said that their colleague, the Rev. Thomas Shepard, tried in vain his art of persuasion:

"You Roxbury Poets, keep clear of the crime
Of missing to give us a very good rhyme.
And you of Dorchester your verses lengthen,
And with the texts own word you will them strengthen."

The rendering of the 137th Psalm is a fair example of the greater part of the book:

"1 The rivers on of Babilon
there when wee did sit downe:
yea even then wee mourned, when
wee remembred Sion.
2 Our Harps wee did hang it amid,
upon the willow tree.
3 Because there they that us away
led in captivitee,
Requir'd of us a song, & thus
askt mirth: us waste who laid,

sing us among a Sions song,
unto us then they said.
4 The lords song sing can wee? being
5 in strangers land. Then let
loose her skill my right hand, if I
Ierusalem forget.
6 Let cleave my tongue my pallate on,
if minde thee doe not I:
if chiefe joyes or'e I prize not more
Ierusalem my joy."

In the 23rd Psalm the translators were at their best. There is something peculiar about this ancient song; no matter into what language it is rendered, it retains a singular beauty:

"1 The Lord to mee a shepheard is,
want therefore shall not I.
2 Hee in the folds of tender-grasse,
doth cause mee downe to lie:
To waters calme me gently leads
3 Restore my soule doth hee:
he doth in paths of righteousnes:
for his names sake leade mee.
4 Yea though in valley of deaths shade
I walk, none ill I'le feare:
because thou art with mee, thy rod,
and staffe my comfort are.
5 For mee a table thou hast spread,
in presence of my foes:
thou dost annoynt my head with oyle,
my cup it over-flowes.
6 Goodness & mercy surely shall
all my dayes follow mee:
and in the Lords house I shall dwell
so long as dayes shall bee."

THE BAY PSALM BOOK

Three hundred years ago compositors were not guided by fixed rules in the matter of spelling and capitalization and punctuation, and a mere glance at the Bay Psalm Book shows that Stephen Daye proceeded in an unusually free and easy manner. Sometimes a period would be put in the middle of a sentence or a word of one syllable divided by a hyphen. There were many curious freaks of typography which were gradually corrected in later editions. The book was a small octavo, the leaves being approximately seven by four and a half inches in size. The seventeen hundred copies were substantially bound in calf, and one of those still surviving has the remnants of the original brass clasps. Only ten copies of this, the oldest and most precious book of American production, are now in existence, and but three are in perfect condition. One is in the Bodleian Library at Oxford, six are in libraries in New York, Boston, and Worcester, and the others are in private collections in America.

As soon as it appeared the new Psalm Book was almost universally accepted by the churches of the Bay Colony, hence the name by which it was known. But in Salem, where the Pilgrim spirit was dominant, Ainsworth's version was retained till 1667, and Plymouth, the stronghold of the Pilgrims, did not give up its beloved Ainsworth for the new version till 1692. A second

edition of the Bay Psalm Book was printed in 1647, with slight corrections. Copies of this edition are extremely rare, only two being known to exist, one in the John Carter Brown Library at Providence, and the other in the British Museum.

In 1650 the third edition appeared. A careful revision of the original book had been made by President Dunster, aided by Richard Lyon, a young man chosen because of his supposed skill in writing poetry. With this expert assistance, Dr. Dunster ventured to add to the Psalms metrical versions of other poetical portions of the Old and New Testaments. But we fail to discern any improvement over the translations of 1640. Here is an extract from the Song of Deborah and Barak:

"Out of a window Sisera
his mother look'd, and said,
The lattess through, in coming why
so long's chariot staid?
His chariot-wheels why tarry they?
Her wise dames answered
Yea she turn'd answer her selfe,
And what have they not sped?
The prey by poll a Maid or twain
what parted have not they?
Have they not parted Sisera
a party-coloured nield-work prey,
of nield-work on each side,
That's party-coloured, meet for necks
of them that spoils divide?"

That such a version should have been sent out and accepted in a community noted for its intelligence, only illustrates the exaggerated reverence felt for the precise language of Scripture, a reverence which led to the belief that it savored of impiety to worship God in words other than those he himself had given. But with all its shortcomings, as measured by later standards, the Bay Psalm Book was a great success. In order to aid in its circulation John Cotton, probably the most influential minister in the colony, wrote a tract in the year 1647, on "Singing of Psalms a Gospel ordinance," in which he sought to quiet the fears of those who had scruples about any kind of singing in the house of God. With his powerful assistance and that of other leaders, the Bay Psalm Book came to be used all over New England and as far as Philadelphia. It passed through twenty-seven editions on this side, and was reprinted many times abroad, where it gained a wide circulation in both England and Scotland. It maintained its place for more than a century.

For fifty years the Bay Psalm Book contained no tunes, and it was inevitable that as the original colonists died off, many of the tunes which had been brought over from England should be forgotten and pass out of use. It was not till 1690 that a few tunes were printed, but no copies of that book are now extant. In 1698, the ninth

edition appeared, containing fourteen tunes, such as Oxford, Litchfield, Low Dutch, York, and Windsor. As we should expect, it was a crude piece of work, with many errors. The tunes were printed in two parts, the bass and treble, and the music was without bars except to divide the lines. Under each note was placed the initial of a syllable denoting the tone to be applied when singing by note, and careful directions were given for the setting of the tune so that it could be carried through "without Squeaking above or Grumbling below."

In 1712, the Rev. John Tufts, pastor at Newbury, published the first practical musical instruction book printed in America. It was "a very plain and easy Introduction to the Art of Singing Psalm Tunes," so "contrived as that the learner may attain the skill of singing them with the greatest ease and speed imaginable." The price was low—"6d, or 5s the duz." Later, Mr. Tufts published a second collection of thirty-seven tunes in three parts, designed to be bound with the Bay Psalm Book. Thus encouragement was given to the proper singing of the Psalms.

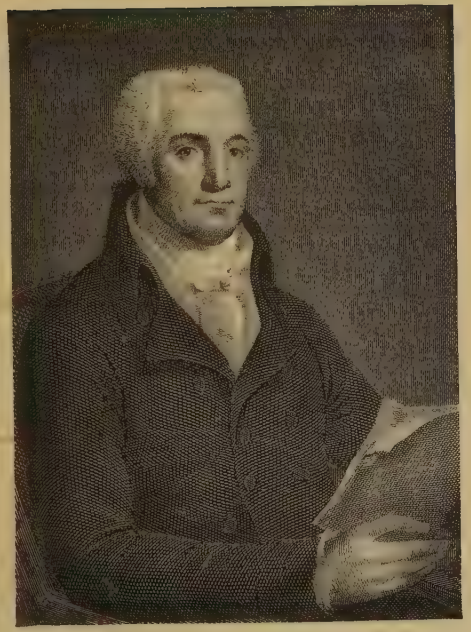
But as the years went by, the tremendous hold which this venerable version had upon the popular heart gradually loosened. The people, especially in the larger towns, became restless. They wanted a more poetical translation. The

Rev. Thomas Prince, one of the most distinguished ministers of colonial days, for forty years pastor of the Old South Church, Boston, determined to make a thorough revision of the Bay Psalm Book. He and his people were unwilling to give it up entirely, but they realized that it must be radically improved. The revision was finished and published just at the close of his life, and was used for the first time at the Old South, the Sunday after his death. He brought a wealth of scholarship to his task, and his renderings are a great improvement over the old version. "For *grand Ideas,*" he says in the preface, "I seek the most *majestick* Words; for *tender Sentiments,* the *softest Words;* for *affecting,* the most *moving;* for *wondrous,* the most *striking.*" The following verses from the 137th Psalm may be compared with the passage already quoted from the same Psalm in the Bay Psalm Book.

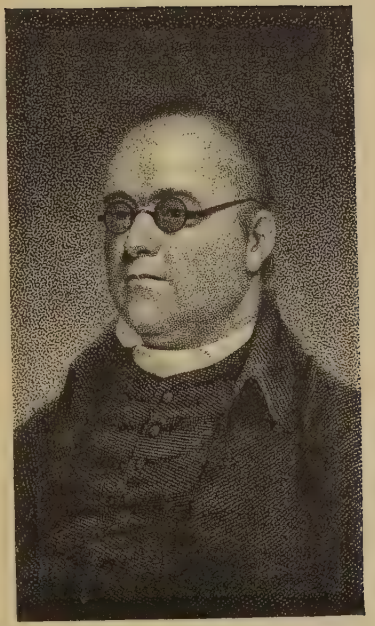
"1 As by the streams of babylon
We captive sat with anxious fears;
Then we dear Zion thought upon,
And melted into streams of tears.
2 Our harps, our instruments of joy,
Which us'd with chearful songs to sound,
We hung upon the willow trees
Which on the shaded banks abound."

Mr. Prince added to the Psalms a selection of fifty hymns—the conservative spirit of the day

would not have permitted any more—all but eight being from Watts. In this form the book was used at the Old South till 1786, when it was discarded, and with it the Bay Psalm Book went out forever.



JOEL BARLOW



TIMOTHY DWIGHT

CHAPTER II

THE "ACCOMMODATED" PSALM BOOKS

In early days there was scant incentive to the writing of hymns. On both sides of the sea the fathers looked upon the Psalms as ample for the divine praises, and save in rare instances hymns of "human composure" were under a strict ban. But gradually sentiment changed. In 1696 a new version of the Psalms appeared in England, by Nahum Tate, Poet-Laureate, and Dr. Nicholas Brady, Chaplain to the King. It marked a notable advance over any of its predecessors, and was welcomed by some of the New England churches. During those same years several small hymn collections made a timid appearance. They were of minor value in themselves, but they helped to usher in something of immense importance.

The year 1707, forever memorable in the annals of English hymnology, gave to the world the famous little book, *Hymns and Spiritual Songs,* by Isaac Watts. Twelve years later, the same writer published *The Psalms of David Imitated.* Here, with commendable daring, he broke away from a slavish adherence to the exact verbiage of the Scripture, and gave a free translation of

the Psalms, as he said, "in the language of the New Testament, and apply'd to the Christian state and worship." The influence of these two small books on Protestant worship in England, and later, in America, for one hundred and fifty years, can scarcely be overstated. Neither book won immediate favor on this side. Our American forbears were far from the ancestral home, and somewhat provincial, and they were in such mortal fear of anything that remotely savored of heresy that they were extremely conservative, loath to part with the old, slow to welcome the new. In preparing his *System of Praise,* Watts had had America especially in mind. He entitled one of the Psalms, the 107th, "A Psalm for New England."

But while a few copies of the Psalms and Hymns found their way across the sea, no one ventured an American reprint till 1729, when Benjamin Franklin brought out an edition of the Psalms on his Philadelphia press. Financially, however, it was a failure, as there was scarcely any demand for the book. The Hymns were not reprinted till 1739, a whole generation after their introduction into England. It was the Great Awakening under Jonathan Edwards, beginning in 1734, and intensified at the time of Whitefield's first visit to New England, in 1740, that made the people thoroughly dissatisfied with the dull, life-

less mode of singing which had so long been in vogue. Then the door was gradually opened to Watts, and once introduced, his *System of Praise* grew into immense favor.

The American Revolution, however, brought unlooked-for difficulties. In his very free rendering into English, Dr. Watts had taken divers liberties with the Psalms, adapting them not only to the use of Christians, but to Christians in Britain, making sundry and very pointed references to the British sovereign and his kingdom. Such references, of course, could not be tolerated in America after the colonies gained their independence. It therefore became necessary to "accommodate" Watts' version to the changed situation. Various individuals in different places tried their hand at the task of revision, but their versions had scarcely more than local sanction. In Connecticut the churches took united action, which led to the issuing of two authorized revisions, which were widely adopted, and the second of which, especially, exerted a lasting influence on American hymnody.

Joel Barlow was instructed by the General Association of Congregational Churches of Connecticut to make the needed alterations. He was an interesting person, this "ingenious Mr. Joel Barlow of Connecticut," as he was called. Born in 1755, he graduated from Yale at the age of

twenty-three, at the head of his class. He had planned to at once begin the study of law, but the Revolution was in progress, his own brothers were in the army, and already, on more than one occasion, he had run away from his books to shoulder a gun. Hearing that there was great need of chaplains, he took a short course in theology, received a license to preach, and served as chaplain till the close of the war, when he resumed his law studies and settled in Hartford. While with the army he may not have been conspicuous in religious work, but he was a poet, as American poets went in those days, and he helped to keep up the spirits of the soldiers by writing patriotic songs and addresses. First and last he had composed a number of poems which were highly regarded, and after his return to private life it was not unnatural that he should be asked to make the desired alterations in Watts' Psalms. His revised edition appeared in 1785 and met with partial favor. He provided Psalm-versions of his own where Watts had none. Several of them passed into later hymnals and were in common use down to recent times. Here is Barlow's rendering of the 108th Psalm:

"Awake, my soul, to sound his praise,
Awake my harp to sing;
Join all my powers the song to raise,
And morning incense bring.

"Among the people of his care,
And thro' the nations round;
Glad songs of praise will I prepare,
And there his name resound.

"Be thou exalted, O my God,
Above the starry train,
Diffuse thy heavenly grace abroad,
And teach the world thy reign.

"So shall thy chosen sons rejoice,
And throng thy courts above;
While sinners hear thy pardoning voice,
And taste redeeming love."

As has been said, Barlow's Psalm Book was not received with universal approbation. It was popular with the Presbyterians, but the Congregational Churches were thoroughly displeased. Barlow had far exceeded his instructions, and instead of simply "accommodating" certain Psalms he had made bold to revise Watts wherever it suited his fancy. This deeply offended many who had expected to use the book. Then there was another unfortunate circumstance. After the Revolution Barlow became immersed in various business and political affairs, especially abroad. While he was in France rumors reached this country that he had abandoned Christianity and become an infidel. The rumors were probably false, but they were credited. This gave a body blow to his Psalm Book, which rapidly fell into complete disfavor. That along

many lines he was an unusually gifted man there can be no doubt. He held an outstanding rank among the very few American poets of the day. His principal work, *The Columbiad,* was published in sumptuous style, and his humorous poem, *The Hasty Pudding,* received wide commendation. In foreign diplomatic service he showed great ability. Washington held him in high regard, and at the time of his death, in 1812, he was United States Minister to France.

But the strict orthodoxy of those days demanded an entirely new book, utterly free from even the suggestion of tainted associations. This time there must be no mistake, and so the one chosen to make the revision was no less a person than Timothy Dwight, the distinguished president of Yale College. He was requested by the General Association of Connecticut to prepare a new edition of Watts' Psalms, "accommodating" those passages which needed it and versifying the Psalms that had been omitted by Watts; but it was understood that no undue liberties were to be taken with the old version.

When we remember that in multitudes of American homes and churches, the Psalm Book had come to occupy a place only second to the Bible itself, we can understand how fortunate was the selection of such a man as Dr. Dwight for the task of revision. He was born in 1752,

a grandson of Jonathan Edwards. He entered college at the age of thirteen and graduated in 1769, sharing with Nathan Strong the leadership of his class. Eight years later, when the college presidency became vacant, the students to a man clamored for the election of young Dwight, and doubtless he would have been chosen had he not absolutely declined the honor. Subsequently, in 1795, he accepted the post, and gave his Alma Mater more than twenty years of brilliant service.

Soon after the outbreak of the Revolution he was appointed chaplain in the American army, and at once became a favorite with both officers and men. He was twenty-five at the time, of fine physical build, and with those sturdy democratic ideals which led him in later years to shatter the narrow aristocracy of Yale. Washington came to know and to greatly admire him. He was an enthusiastic patriot, and no sooner had he entered the army than he began to write songs for the soldiers. His "Ode on the Glory of Columbia" began with the stirring lines:

> "Columbia, Columbia, to glory arise,
> The queen of the world and child of the skies!
> Thy genius commands thee; with rapture behold,
> While ages on ages thy splendors unfold."

Songs of real merit were scarce, and Dwight's productions were eagerly caught up and sung everywhere by the soldiers. At the close of the

war he was chosen a member of the Massachusetts Legislature, and had he consented he would have been sent to Congress.

While no one would think of calling Timothy Dwight a poet in any large sense, he had a distinct poetic talent of which he made full use. When only twenty-four he finished an elaborate epic in eleven books, *The Conquest of Canaan,* which, when published some years later, was well received both at home and abroad. The poet Cowper commended it very cordially. Other poems followed from his pen. This, then, was the man, scholar, patriot, poet, to whom was committed the difficult and delicate task of revising the Psalm Book of Isaac Watts. His standing among the churches of the New World was so high that whatever he might send out would be accepted as authoritative. He showed his skill in "accommodating" the English version to American conditions. Thus, in paraphrasing the 18th Psalm, Watts wrote, with the British Red Coats in mind:

"'Tis by thine Aid our Troops prevail,
And break united Powers,
Or burn their boasted Fleets, or scale
The proudest of their Tow'rs.
How have we chas'd them thro' the Fields
And trod them to the Ground,
While thy Salvation was our Shield,
But they no Shelter found."

This would never do for America. And so, with an eye to Bunker Hill and Saratoga and Yorktown, and thinking of Washington, the mighty chieftain, Dwight wrote as follows:

"When, fir'd to rage, against our nation rose
Chiefs of proud name, and bands of haughty foes,
He train'd our hosts to fight, with arms array'd
With health invigor'd, and with bounty fed,
Gave us his chosen chief our sons to guide,
Heard every prayer, and every want supplied.
He gave their armies captive to our hands,
Or sent them frustrate to their native lands."

This certainly has a patriotic ring about it that ought to have satisfied the most ardent soul, though it strikes us as somewhat odd that such Psalm versions should have been used as a regular part of divine worship.

In Watts, the 75th Psalm is "applied to the glorious Revolution of King William, or the happy accession of King George to the throne." Dwight wrote an entirely new version and called it "A Psalm for a General Election." It would suit our own times admirably. Here are some of the lines:

"While from thy hand our rulers take their power
Give them thy greatness humbly to adore."

. . . . . .

May they

"Defend the poor, debasing bribes disdain,
Avenge bold wrongs, nor wield the sword in vain.

Give them the public weal alone to prize,
And each base purpose nobly to despise;
Teach them, that greatness, power, and place are
thine,
Gifts from thy hand, bestow'd for ends divine;
Rulers, thy Stewards, to mankind are given
To shower the good, and build the cause of heaven;
From thee a rich reward the faithful know;
The faithless hasten to distinguished woe."

Think of such sentiments embodied in a book of devotion used in public and private worship all over the land, and clothed with more than human authority! How potent for good the influence must have been! A number of Dwight's paraphrases, although professedly Psalms and printed with them, were such free renderings that they passed into general use as independent hymns. The paraphrase by which he is best known is the one inspired by the words of the 137th Psalm: "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy."

"I love thy Kingdom, Lord,
The house of thine abode,
The Church our blest Redeemer saved
With his own precious blood.

"I love thy Church, O God:
Her walls before thee stand,
Dear as the apple of thine eye
And graven on thy hand.

"If e'er to bless thy sons
My voice or hands deny,
These hands let useful skill forsake,
This voice in silence die.

"If e'er my heart forget
Her welfare or her woe,
Let every joy this heart forsake,
And every grief o'erflow.

"For her my tears shall fall,
For her my prayers ascend;
To her my cares and toils be given
Till toils and cares shall end.

"Beyond my highest joy
I prize her heavenly ways,
Her sweet communion, solemn vows,
Her hymns of love and praise.

"Jesus, thou Friend Divine,
Our Saviour and our King,
Thy hand from every snare and foe
Shall great deliverance bring.

"Sure as thy truth shall last,
To Zion shall be given
The brightest glories earth can yield,
And brighter bliss of heaven."

The name of Timothy Dwight is famed in early American hymnology, and the above stanzas are the choicest contribution he has left us. Probably no hymn of the church is held in more widespread favor. It is loved and sung the world around.

Dr. Dwight died in 1817, after a most illustrious career. The amount of work he accomplished was all the more astonishing when we remember that in early manhood his eyes were seriously injured, so that "during the greater part of forty years he was not able to read fifteen minutes in the twenty-four hours; and often, for days and weeks together, the pain which he endured in that part of the head immediately behind the eyes amounted to anguish." And still he conquered.

SAMUEL DAVIES

CHAPTER III

PIONEER HYMN WRITERS

While the Psalms and hymns of Watts were coming into use in the New World, Americans themselves were trying their hand at versifying. Reference has just been made to the noble paraphrase of the 137th Psalm by Dwight. But with rare exceptions the hymns of the eighteenth century have long since been forgotten, for though colonial America had theologians and preachers second to none she was not yet on intimate terms with the muses. During the years that Charles Wesley and Doddridge and Cowper and Toplady and a score of others were enriching the literature of England with a veritable treasury of sacred song, the yield on this side of the sea was scanty and for the most part of an inferior order.

Nor, indeed, as already stated, was there much incentive to hymn-writing. The Episcopal and many of the Presbyterian Churches held strictly to the singing of Psalms, while the Congregational Churches, and such of the Baptist and Presbyterian as preferred hymns, were well contented with the collection by Watts. The Methodists were few in number, and they had their

Wesleyan hymn book. Not till American independence became more than a political fact, and the sons of this new soil awoke to full self-consciousness and felt the spur of freemen and heard the call of a new age, did the era of hymn-writing, in any large and worthy sense, begin on this side of the Atlantic. But while this is true, the pioneer efforts date from a much earlier time, and are of genuine interest not only because they were pioneer but because in some instances they were decidedly creditable.

A forerunner among American hymn writers was Samuel Davies. Without doubt he was one of the most brilliant men that adorned the American pulpit during colonial days. He was born in 1723 and died at the early age of thirty-seven, but in that short time he made a wonderful record. He preached in Virginia for several years, and in 1759 he succeeded Jonathan Edwards as president of the College of New Jersey, now Princeton University. As a pulpit orator he was the most distinguished American of his times. The crowds that gathered to hear him were so great that again and again, like Whitefield, he held his services in the open air. Before he was thirty he visited England, and his preaching in London created such a stir that it attracted the attention of George the Second, who invited the young man—albeit he was a Presbyterian—to

occupy the pulpit of the Chapel Royal. Davies did so, and the king was so delighted with the sermon that during its delivery he could not refrain from repeatedly whispering words of praise to those who sat near him.

Davies was quite given to preaching on current events—indeed, this was one secret of his immense popularity. Being of a poetic bent, he was also in the habit, now and again, of appending an original hymn to his sermon. These hymns do not appear to have been sung by the people, but they form a very appropriate and effective close to the printed discourses.

The Lisbon earthquake occurred in 1755 and made a profound impression on both Europe and America. It moved Charles Wesley to write a special group of hymns, which came into general circulation. Samuel Davies improved the occasion to preach a sermon of warning and admonition. The hymn which followed it bore the title: "The Different States of Sinners and Saints in the Wreck of Nature." It is now entirely forgotten, but for many years it was widely used both in America and England. In part it ran as follows:

"How great, how terrible that God,
Who shakes Creation with his Nod!
He frowns, and Earth's Foundations shake,
And all the Wheels of Nature break.

"Where now, oh where shall Sinners seek
For Shelter in the general Wreck!
Shall falling Rocks be o'er them thrown?
See Rocks, like snow dissolving down.

"In vain for mercy now they cry;
In Lakes of liquid Fire they lie;
There on the flaming billows tost,
Forever—oh, forever lost!

"But, Saints, undaunted and serene
Your Eyes shall view the dreadful Scene;
Your Saviour lives, tho' Worlds expire,
And Earth and Skies dissolve in Fire."

In the early collections this hymn was included among those classified as "Alarming," and designed to arouse sinners from their easy slumbers. But it should be added that most of Davies' hymns were not of this character. Indeed, for that age they were remarkably free from the smell of fire and brimstone.

The year of the earthquake also witnessed the disastrous defeat of the British and colonial forces under Braddock, by the French and Indians. A wave of dismay swept over the central colonies and especially Virginia. The general gloom was deepened by the almost complete loss of the crops, from lack of rain. Davies, who was an ardent patriot, took occasion to preach a special sermon on, "Virginia's Danger and Remedy, and occasioned by the severe Drought in

sundry Parts of that Country, and the Defeat of General Braddock." With dramatic eloquence he pictured the "Slaughtered families, mangled corpses, men, women, and children held in barbarous captivity in the dens of savages; routed garrisons, demolished fortifications, deserted, desolated settlements upon our frontiers." With fiery zeal he denounced France as the center of a "formidable confederacy of Popish tyrants" which was trying to shatter British liberties, and then he feelingly referred to "our brave ally, the King of Prussia." Strange reading in these days of reversed alliances! Following the sermon came this hymn, which later found its way into the hymnals of various denominations and was in use down to recent times as appropriate for Fast-Days:

"While o'er our guilty Land, O Lord,
We view the Terrors of thy Sword;
While Heav'n its fruitful Show'rs denies,
And Nature round us fades and dies;

"While Clouds collecting o'er our Head
Seem charg'd with Wrath to smite us dead,
Oh! whither shall the helpless fly?
To whom but Thee direct their cry?

"On Thee, our Guardian God we call,
Before thy Throne of Grace we fall;
And is there no Deliv'rance there?
And must we perish in Despair?

"See, we repent, we weep, we mourn,
To our forsaken God we turn;
O spare our guilty country, spare
The church which thou hast planted here."

It will be remembered that following the defeat of Braddock, the army was saved from total destruction by the skill and heroism of George Washington, at that time a young man of twenty-three. A few weeks later, Samuel Davies preached before a company of Colonial Volunteers and praised the martial spirit of the country's defenders. As a footnote in the printed sermon he added these words: "As a remarkable instance of this, I may point out to the public that heroic youth, Colonel Washington, whom I cannot but hope Providence has hitherto preserved in so signal a manner for some important service to his country." Bear in mind, this was in 1755.

Samuel Davies' hymns were printed and found favor in England even before they became generally known in America. Dr. John Rippon, of London, included seven of them in the famous Baptist Hymn Book which he published in 1787. One of them became so popular that it appeared in more than one hundred hymn books in England alone, though it is not so well known on this side. The first two stanzas are as follows:

"Great God of Wonders! All thy Ways
Are matchless, godlike, and divine,
But the fair Glories of thy Grace
More godlike and unrivall'd shine:
Who is a pard'ning God like Thee?
Or who has Grace so rich and free?"

"Crimes of such Horror to forgive,
Such guilty daring Worms to spare,
This is thy grand Prerogative,
And none shall in thy Honor share.
Who is a pard'ning God like Thee?
Or who has Grace so rich and free?"

The hymn by President Davies which is best known in America is the one beginning, "Lord, I am thine, entirely thine."

It was among the seven in Rippon's Selection, but there the force of the opening line was broken by being put as a question: "Lord, am I thine, entirely thine?"

Happily, in other collections, the declarative form of the original, with its strong, Pauline assurance, has been retained. This hymn was included in the early American hymn books of the last century, and to-day it is a standard with most denominations in this country, though singularly enough, almost unknown in England. It has the distinction of being the oldest hymn of American origin in general use. It was originally appended to a sermon on "Dedication to God," from the words of Paul, "Ye are not your

own; for ye are bought with a price," a sermon preparatory to the Lord's Supper. As the preacher drew to the close he rose to a dramatic climax. He appealed to his hearers to "Make the transaction [of self-dedication] as solemn and explicit as you can and follow me, while I speak for you: Lord, here is a poor sinner, thy creature redeemed by the blood of thy Son, that has long been a slave to other masters, and withheld from thee thy just and dear-bought property; here, Lord, I would now, freely and without reserve, devote and surrender myself, my soul and body, and my all to thee, to be universally and forever thine. And let the omnipotent God, let angels and men, be witness to the engagement. Do you, my dear brethren, heartily consent to this formula? Then the contract is ready for sealing; therefore let us rise and crowd round the table of our Lord, and there annex our solemn seals, and acknowledge it as our act and deed."

When we picture to ourselves the great throng such as always gathered to hear Samuel Davies preach, as we listen to the fervid sermon with its glowing appeal, and then watch the eager worshipers pressing forward to the Sacramental table, the words of this noble old hymn of consecration take on a new meaning:

"Lord, I am thine, entirely thine,
Purchased and saved by blood divine;

With full consent thine I would be,
And own thy sovereign right in me.

"Grant one poor sinner more a place
Among the children of thy grace;
A wretched sinner, lost to God,
But ransomed by Immanuel's blood.

"Thine would I live, thine would I die,
Be thine through all eternity;
The vow is past beyond repeal,
Now will I set the solemn seal.

"Here, at that cross where flows the blood
That bought my guilty soul for God,
Thee, my new Master, now I call,
And consecrate to thee my all."

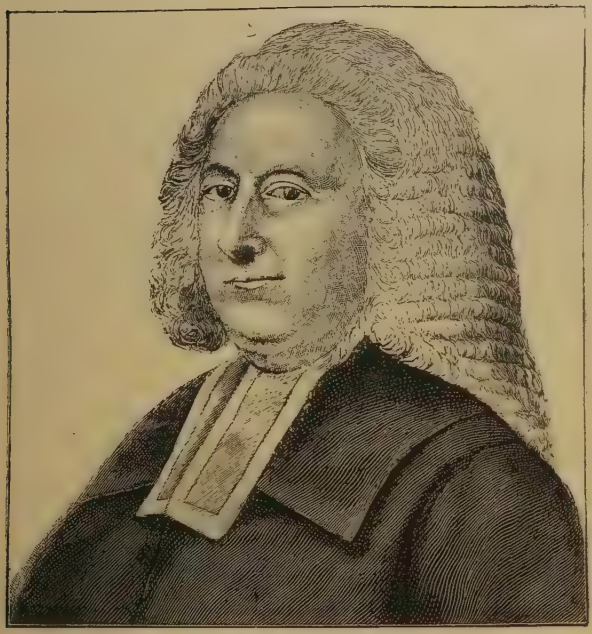
Davies died on February 4, 1761. He seems to have had a premonition of the approaching end. The text of his New Year's sermon, preached only a month before, was, "This year thou shalt die." This pioneer hymnist will always hold a place of high honor in the annals of American hymnology.

While Samuel Davies, the Presbyterian, was writing hymns in Virginia, Mather Byles, the Congregationalist, was similarly employed in New England. Born in 1706, graduating from Harvard at the age of nineteen, he entered the ministry and became pastor of the newly organized church—destined to become famous—on Hollis Street, Boston. Here he remained till

1776 and doubtless would have ended his days there had he not been such a confirmed Tory. He was not only deprived of his pulpit, but for some time was held a prisoner in his own home. He was the wit of all Boston and an incorrigible punster. He called the sentinel who was posted in front of the house an "Observe-a-Tory," and after that official had been changed several times and was finally withdrawn altogether, he remarked of himself that it was a case of being "guarded, reguarded, and disregarded."

Mather Byles was an eloquent preacher and a man of considerable literary distinction. He began writing poetry when scarcely more than a boy, and a volume of his poems was afterward printed. He corresponded with a number of English celebrities, including Swift and Pope, and the latter sent him his newly translated *Odyssey*. He was also on pleasant terms with Isaac Watts. Though not an extensive composer of hymns, nor producing anything of permanent merit, what he wrote was superior to most that America was giving the world in those days. One of his hymns, on the Greatness of God, closes with these lines:

"Who can behold the blazing light?
Who can approach consuming flame?
None but thy Wisdom knows thy Might;
None but thy Word can speak thy Name.



MATHER BYLES

"Great God, forgive our feeble Lays,
On our cold lips the anthems die;
A Song to equal all thy Praise,
Calls for the Voice that tun'd the Sky."

Another hymn, the best known from the pen of Byles, included by Henry Ward Beecher in the collection prepared for Plymouth Church in 1855, and found in books of still later date, is the following, which we quote in part:

"When wild Confusion wrecks the Air,
And Tempests rend the Skies,
Whilst blended Ruin, Clouds and Fire
In harsh Disorder rise,

"Safe in my Saviour's Love, I'll stand,
And strike a tuneful Song;
My Harp all-trembling in my Hand,
And all inspir'd my Tongue.

"Come quickly, Blessed Hope! appear,
Bid thy swift chariot fly;
Let Angels tell thy coming near,
And snatch me to the Sky."

While Mather Byles did something for American hymnology through his original contributions, he also helped in another way. In 1760 he introduced into the church of which he was pastor a book of praise which contained not only the Psalms in meter, but also one hundred hymns by Watts and others. Even at this date hymn-singing in public worship was frowned upon in so many places, that it meant much when a pulpit

leader like Byles threw the weight of his example and influence on the side of a System of Praise which marked such a decided advance over anything that had been used in the past.

In 1723, the same year in which Samuel Davies was born in Delaware, Samson Occom began life near Norwich, Connecticut. He was destined to become the most famous Christian Indian in New England if not in all America. He belonged to the Mohegans, and like his fellow-tribesmen, he grew up a pagan. But the Great Awakening under Jonathan Edwards was abroad in the land. Preachers with a heavenly message were going everywhere telling the good news to whites and Indians alike. When seventeen years old Occom was soundly converted. He had the rare good fortune to be received into the home of Rev. Eleazar Wheelock, at Lebanon, Connecticut, who had gathered about him a few youths for instruction. Here the young man remained for the next four years, obtaining a fair education, especially in the Scriptures. His Hebrew Bible, bound in deerskin, doubtless the work of his own hands, is still preserved. He was ambitious to go through Yale and take a theological course, but his health would not permit it. For some years he served as a lay missionary among the Indians at Montauk, at the eastern end of Long Island. Then, in 1759, after he had preached a trial ser-

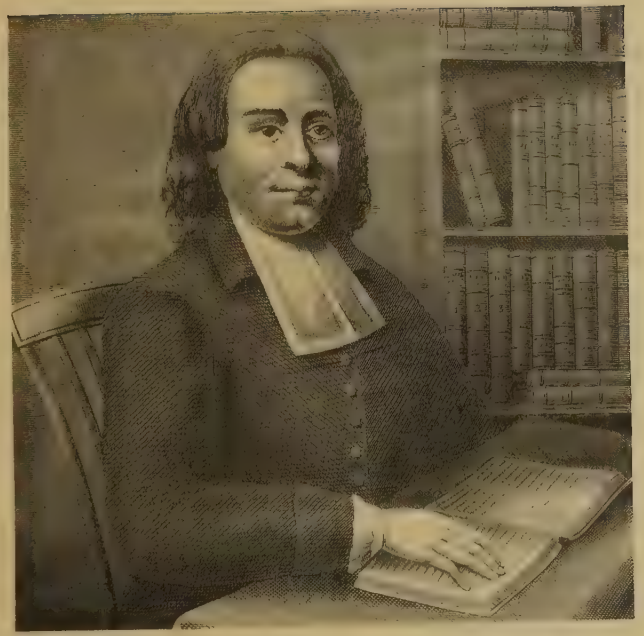
mon and had passed an examination that would have tested a white candidate, he was solemnly ordained to the Christian ministry in the Presbyterian Church. This was so extraordinary an event that it made a profound impression throughout New England. He soon began missionary work among the Oneida Indians, but the white settlers whom he met were harder to manage than the redskins, which drew from Occom the naïve comment, "I have thought there was no Heathen but the wild Indian, but I think now there is some English Heathen."

The eager desire of Occom to attend school and the good use he made of all he learned, awakened a growing interest in the subject of Indian education; so much so that his friends arranged for him to go to England to raise money for an Indian Charity School. He was the first Indian preacher who had ever visited Britain, and his appearance in the pulpit created a sensation. He spoke more than three hundred times and crowds gathered to hear him. George Whitefield, who had often met him in America and fully appreciated the value of his work, introduced him in the highest circles, and for more than a year he went about, almost lionized. The marvel is that the poor man's head was not turned. But he came back to his native land as simple-hearted and zealous as ever, having raised £15,000, an

immense sum for those days. A school was established at Hanover, New Hampshire, and soon after was incorporated with Dartmouth College.

In 1772 an Indian who had committed murder was sentenced to be hanged at New Haven. At the condemned man's earnest appeal, Samson Occom preached a sermon on the eve of the execution. A great crowd of white men and Indians listened to it with rapt attention. It was afterward printed and widely circulated both here and abroad. A single quotation will illustrate Occom's power of imagination. Describing the endless future, he exclaimed: "O eternity, eternity, eternity! Who can measure it? Who can count the years thereof? Arithmetic must fail, the thoughts of men and angels are drowned in it; how shall we describe eternity? To what shall we compare it? Were it possible to employ a fly to carry off this globe by the small particles thereof, and to carry them to such a distance that it should return once in ten thousand years for another particle, and so continue until it has carried off all this globe, and framed them together in some unknown space, until it has made just such a world as this is; after all, eternity would remain the same unexhausted duration."

In 1774 Mr. Occom was emboldened to make a new venture, to prepare a *Choice Collection of Hymns and Spiritual Songs.* The Indians of



SAMSON OCCOM

NATHAN STRONG

New England, in a primitive way were fond of music. Governor Winslow relates how "they use to sing themselves asleepe" with "barbarous singing"; and a letter written in 1705 to Sir William Ashurst, in England, and signed by several eminent colonial ministers, spoke in particular of the Indians' "excellent singing of Psalms, with most ravishing melody." The Christian Indians greatly enjoyed Psalm singing, and at a later date, when hymns were introduced, their enthusiasm knew no bounds. Occom's diary, recording his missionary journeys through the forests, is full of references to the vociferous singing of the red men. They may sometimes have been weak in prayer and good works, but they were mighty in song. Occom himself was a good singer and tolerably acquainted with music. His visit to England opened his eyes to the value of hymns in public worship, and he brought back with him a number of collections which aided him in the preparation of his own book.

But what especially interests us is the fact that Occom himself was a writer of hymns, though for some unknown reason none of them appear in his own collection, and it is therefore difficult to positively identify them. Of one, however, there is no reasonable doubt that it is the work of this gifted Indian preacher. It is

entitled, "The New Birth," and it merits quotation in full:

"Wak'd by the gospel's joyful sound,
My soul in guilt and thrall I found,
Exposed to endless woe:
Eternal truth aloud proclaim'd,
The sinner must be born again,
Or else to ruin go.

"Surpris'd I was, but could not tell
Which way to shun the gates of hell,
For they were drawing near:
I strove indeed, but all in vain—
The sinner must be born again,
Still sounded in my ear.

"Then to the law I flew for help;
But still the weight of guilt I felt,
And no relief I found:
While death eternal gave me pain,
The sinner must be born again,
Did loud as thunder sound.

"God's justice now I did behold,
And guilt lay heavy on my soul—
It was a heavy load!
I read my Bible; it was plain
The sinner must be born again,
Or feel the wrath of God.

"I heard some tell how Christ did give
His life, to let the sinner live;
But him I could not see:
This solemn truth did still remain—
The sinner must be born again,
Or dwell in misery.

"But as my soul, with dying breath,
Was gasping in eternal death,
Christ Jesus I did spy:
Free grace and pardon he proclaim'd;
The sinner then was born again,
With raptures I did cry.

"The Angels in the world above,
And saints can witness to the love,
Which then my soul enjoy'd.
My soul did mount on faith, its wing,
And glory, glory, did I sing,
To Jesus Christ my Lord.

"Come, needy sinners, hear me tell
What boundless love in Jesus dwell,
How mercy doth abound;
Let none of mercy doubting stand,
Since I the chief of sinners am,
Yet I have mercy found."

Early in the last century this hymn became widely known in England, and in 1814 it was translated into Welsh. For years it was a favorite in the Welsh revivals, and Dr. Joseph Belcher, writing in 1859, said that "no doubt can be entertained of its having led many hundred sinners to the cross of Christ." Up to recent times it was found with alterations in a number of American collections, but now, unfortunately, it has almost entirely passed out of use. It is interesting to know that in some Indian tribes it is still sung by the Christians, who hold in rever-

ent memory the noble man who devoted his life to the saving of his own race.

Another early hymn-writer, entirely lacking the education and culture of Davies and Byles, but abounding in zeal, was Henry Alline. Born at Newport, Rhode Island, in 1748, he lived to be only thirty-five. He became a preacher and quickly developed into a flaming evangelist of great popularity. Though holding some curious theological ideas, fundamentally he was sound. He wrote many books, but we are especially interested in his collection of *Hymns and Spiritual Songs.* They number 487, and the astonishing fact is that they are all from the pen of Alline himself. He was thus by far the most prolific American hymn writer of his day. But as we may well surmise, most of his productions were decidedly commonplace. His book passed through several editions, but only one of his hymns obtained general recognition. This one continued in use for many years. The opening stanzas are as follows:

"Amazing sight, the Saviour stands,
And knocks at every door!
Ten thousand blessings in his hands
To satisfy the poor.

" 'Behold,' he saith, 'I bleed and die
To bring you to my rest:
Hear, sinners, while I'm passing by,
And be forever blest.' "

Belonging to this same period were stray hymns whose authorship is unknown, but which were held in high favor. One of these was used among the Baptists. The Rev. Morgan Edwards, who was pastor of the Baptist Church in Philadelphia prior to the Revolution, tells us that just outside the city, on the bank of the Schuylkill, was a baptisterion, where the Baptists brought their candidates for immersion. Near by was a large stone from which the sermon was preached. On these occasions the "Schuylkill Hymn" was sung with great fervor.

"Jesus master O discover
Pleasure in us, now we stand
On this bank of Schuylkill river,
To obey thy great command.

. . . . . .

"Of our vows this stone's a token
Stone of Witness bear record
'Gainst us, if our vows be broken
Or if we forsake the Lord.

"Hence we go our way rejoicing
Conscious of our pleasing God,
Foll'wing Jesus *still* proposing
In the paths his feet have trod."

This hymn continued in use among the Baptists for many years. It could be adapted to a particular locality by changing the name of the river, as, in New York, for example, by using "Hudson" instead of "Schuylkill."

CHAPTER IV

HYMNS ON DEATH AND PERDITION

Béranger, the French lyric writer, once exclaimed, "Let me make the songs of the people, and I care not who makes their laws." We can well believe that more than one poet whose productions have enriched the world's hymnody would have been ready to say, "Let me make the hymns of the people, and I care not who makes their creeds"; which is only another way of expressing the fact that no creed or set of creeds, however venerable and complete, can exert as great an influence in shaping the religious faith and life of the masses as can a collection of popular hymns.

The hymns in turn are the outgrowth of human belief and experience, and very often reflect with remarkable fidelity the religious and theological mind of the times in which they were written. Indeed, if all other sources of information were closed, quite a full and accurate account of the general trend of religious thought and feeling during the past four hundred years could be written from simply studying the hymns of these centuries. The militant verses of Martin Luther and Gustavus Adolphus, the raptur-

ous songs of Charles Wesley, the missionary outburst of the early nineteenth century, and the flood of social service hymns of the last two decades only illustrate in a notable way how promptly and accurately the religious faith and experience of a period are reflected and interpreted in the hymns of that period.

We find a similar illustration in a certain type of hymn which met with widespread favor during a considerable part of the eighteenth century and well on into the nineteenth. The Puritan migration, which speedily followed the coming of the Pilgrim Fathers to New England in 1620, brought to these shores a race of men whose influence on all subsequent generations of American life has been by far the most potent of any factor entering into the development of thought and practice in this country. Of their good qualities it is needless to speak; no one would think of denying them. But Puritanism was such a swift and sharp reaction from what had been, that inevitably it brought with it some undesirable results. The typical Puritan was a man of iron, mighty in his convictions, ready to suffer for his faith, but a faith that too often was somber and stern. In shunning "the evils of an unbridled appetite" he practiced starvation and imposed it on others. A popular and cruel sport in the England of those days was bearbaiting. The Puri-

tans severely denounced it, but, as Macaulay has acutely observed, "not because it gave pain to the bear, but because it gave pleasure to the spectators."

The Puritanism which was transplanted to these shores grew even sterner and more cheerless than that of the Mother Country. The time came when the children were taught to sing:

"Come, let us now forget our mirth,
And think that we must die."

Pleasure, however pure and innocent, was regarded with suspicion as containing the germ of evil. The letters and journals written in those days, especially by young people, were supposed to be filled with pious reflections and phrases which must have been as unnatural then as they would be now.

Morbid views of life and death were directly encouraged. One of the earliest hymns of Charles Wesley to be used in America was that unfortunate production, so little like its author, beginning with the lugubrious lines:

"Ah, lovely appearance of death!
What sight upon earth is so fair?
Not all the gay pageants that breathe
Can with a dead body compare:
With solemn delight I survey
The corpse, when the spirit is fled,
In love with the beautiful clay,
And longing to lie in its stead."

Yet hymn books which had no place for Wesley's "Love divine, all loves excelling," or "Hark! the herald angels sing," eagerly included this hymn because it was in perfect accord with the spirit of the age.

In an earlier chapter reference was made to the new version of Watts' Psalms prepared by Joel Barlow and published in 1786. He was instructed by the Association of the Congregational Churches of Connecticut, under whose direction the work was done, to append to the Psalms a collection of hymns. He selected seventy which he thought most suitable for public worship. A committee of three learned divines reviewed these hymns and reported: "We have carefully examined and approved, and we therefore recommend them." After this weighty indorsement, we turn with eager anticipation to the sacred collection. Of course Watts is represented, but we look in vain for what many regard as his masterpiece, "When I survey the wondrous cross." In its place we find this other from his pen:

> "My thoughts on awful subjects roll,
> Damnation and the dead."

We search for Charles Wesley's inspired words, "Jesus, Lover of my soul." They are nowhere to be found, but instead we have this from Watts:

"Hark, from the tombs, a doleful sound,
Mine ears attend the cry—
Ye living men, come, view the ground
Where you must shortly lie."

The simple fact that in a small collection of only seventy hymns, to be used every Sunday and at various week-night gatherings, by young people and children, as well as by the aged, such hymns should find an honored place, is a sufficient commentary on the spirit of the times in which the book was prepared.

But far more serious, in subverting men's faith in the love and goodness and justice of God, were the grossly false views held concerning future punishment. Standing in the old Copps Hill Burial Ground in Boston, beside the small section of unconsecrated land fenced off from the rest of the cemetery, the section where in olden times were laid away the bodies of unbaptized and eternally doomed infants, one begins to realize the heartlessness of a theology which taught that the vast majority of mankind are forever lost; that in the next world parents will look upon their own children writhing in the flames of hell, with no pity or sorrow in their hearts, but with songs of joy and praise flowing from their lips; a theology which called upon candidates for the ministry to declare their willingness to be damned for the glory of God; that inspired

Charles G. Finney, the most noted evangelist of his time, as late as the winter of 1829, to stand before a vast audience in New York and with clenched fists and blazing eyes to cry: "The time will come in the history of every lost sinner, when God will be compelled to exert the utmost of his infinite power to hold the wretch in existence, while he inflicts upon him the utmost of his infinite vengeance"—preaching which drove more than one hapless victim into insanity.

But some valuations were not the same a century and a half ago that they are now. While Jonathan Edwards was still living, the statute books of England enumerated more than two hundred crimes for which a person might be put to death. Human life was below par in those days; immortal souls were also at a discount. Eternal punishment was a staple subject for the pulpit; men talked glibly of the damnation of hell. A difference of a few million, more or less, in the number of the lost signified little.

We must keep these facts clearly in mind if we would understand the hymnody of this period. Many of the hymns which seem to us so harsh and even revolting, were simply an expression in verse of views which were widely and implicitly held at that time. Thus the worshipers could sing with lusty voice and no trace of mental reservation:

"Far in the deep where darkness dwells,
The land of horror and despair;
Justice has built a dismal hell,
And laid her stores of vengeance there.

"Eternal plagues and heavy chains,
Tormenting racks and fiery coals,
And darts t' inflict immortal pains,
Dipped in the blood of damned souls."

In the hymn by Samuel Davies, already quoted, it was in perfect keeping with the spirit and language of the time, 1758, when he wrote of sinners:

"In vain for mercy now they cry;
In lakes of liquid fire they lie;
There, on the flaming billows tost,
Forever, O, forever, lost."

At the close of the century, when Nathan Strong, the distinguished pastor of the First Congregational Church of Hartford—of whom we shall have more to say presently—brought out his famous *Selection of Hymns,* he described the fate of the wicked in more temperate language. "The great Judge" speaks:

"Go burn the chaff in endless fire,
In flames unquenched consume each tare;
Sinners must feel my holy ire,
And sink in guilt to deep despair."

But a few years later, when Dr. Parkinson, pastor of the First Baptist Church of New

York, wrote on the subject, he used more graphic terms, declaring that sinners

"Sink to dwell
Among the infernal howling ghosts,
In blackest shades of death and hell."

Even the children were compelled to face the stern realities of another world. In a children's Song Book published by the American Sunday School Union as late as 1826, we find lines like these:

"Where shall a guilty child retire?
Forgotten and unknown?
In hell I meet the dreadful fire;
In Heaven the glorious throne."

Many of the hymns which were in high favor with the fathers of a hundred years ago and more, were characterized by a narrow individualism, an almost smug complacency in view of one's personal safety, and a too frequent absence of any burning concern for the fate of others. The traveler between New York and Boston, by the way of Providence, passes through Kingston, the seat of Rhode Island College. In colonial days the place was known as Little Rest. Once a month services were held in the village church by Gershum Palmer, an itinerant preacher whose circuit embraced sixty miles of wilderness. When a young man, some years before the Revolution, he conducted the funeral of a girl by the name of

Polly. She had scandalized the church people by her giddy behavior, and when she died, after a brief illness, there appeared some verses entitled "Wicked Polly." The only excuse for quoting this absurd doggerel is the fact that it is an excellent example of a certain class of fugitive verses which were in circulation in colonial New England, especially in the rural sections, and which were designed to strike terror to the hearts of the ungodly. "Wicked Polly" was sung at Little Rest, and doubtless at other places, on occasions when it was felt that the young people needed special warning. One Sunday, at the age of ninety-two, Father Palmer himself sang it as a solo. The venerable man was assisted to the pulpit by two deacons, and as with quavering voice he uttered the words, the people listened with breathless attention:

"O young people, hark while I relate
The story of poor Polly's fate!
She was a lady young and fair,
And died a-groaning in despair.

"She would go to balls and dance and play,
In spite of all her friends could say;
'I'll turn,' said she, 'when I am old,
And God will then receive my soul':

"One Sabbath morning she fell sick;
Her stubborn heart began to ache.
She cries, 'Alas, my days are spent!
It is too late now to repent.'

"She called her mother to her bed,
Her eyes were rolling in her head;
A ghastly look she did assume;
She cries, 'Alas! I am undone.'

" 'My loving father, you I leave;
For wicked Polly do not grieve;
For I must burn forevermore,
When thousand thousand years are o'er.'

" 'Your counsels I have slighted all,
My carnal appetite to fill.
When I am dead, remember well
Your wicked Polly groans in hell.'

"She (w)rung her hands and groaned and cried
And gnawed her tongue before she died;
Her nails turned black, her voice did fail,
She died and left this lower vale.

"May this a warning be to those
That love the ways that Polly chose,
Turn from your sins, lest you, like her,
Shall leave this world in black despair."

It is not surprising that a young girl who was present on this occasion was so terrified that she could never forget it, and from her lips the story has come down to our own times.

Such a theology, whether expressed in sermon or in hymn, was bound to leave its mark. A certain type of mind was not seriously affected, but timid, sensitive souls suffered untold distress. How many were driven into insanity will never be known, but the tragic fact is on record that in nearly every large family some member was

chained. No wonder that the protest which had long been slumbering at length broke out in vigorous reaction. In 1800, forty-two years after the death of Jonathan Edwards, so sweeping had been the change that all the churches in Boston, with one exception, were occupied by Unitarian preachers. But we must remember that the Unitarianism of that day was not what it is now. It was not so much a protest against Trinitarianism as against certain teachings of the older theology. The human heart demanded that the Fatherhood of God be given as large a place as his Sovereignty, that the divine Love and Mercy be made at least co-emphatic with the divine Justice and Wrath. Several decades passed before this was fully accomplished, but an excellent beginning was made more than a century ago.

In 1795, Jeremy Belknap, a prominent Boston pastor, published a hymn book, which for many years was held in high favor. It was avowedly Unitarian, and yet so far as its theology is concerned it could be used in the most orthodox communion of to-day. In his preface the compiler said, "It is humbly apprehended that a grateful and affectionate address to the exalted Saviour of mankind, or a hymn in honor of the Eternal Spirit, cannot be disagreeable to the mind of God." The opening hymn was by

Thomas Scott, an English clergyman, and was a protest against a theology of terror and coercion:

"Absurd and vain attempt! to bind
With iron chains, the freeborn mind!
To force conviction, and reclaim
The wandering, by destructive flame!"

A number of Watts' hymns were included, and whenever Belknap thought an improvement could be made by addition or otherwise, he did not hesitate to try his skill, with more success, it must be admitted, than is usual in such cases. For example, Watts concluded a hymn on repentance with the words:

"Strike, mighty grace, our flinty souls,
Till melting waters flow;
And deep contrition drown our eyes,
In undissembled woe."

Belknap added this stanza:

"But flowing tears cannot suffice,
To make repentance sure;
Then let our hearts be purify'd
As Christ the Lord is pure."

The whole book was pervaded with this evangelical spirit, and at the same time was free from the horrors which marred so much of the hymnody of that period.

Of the same general tone was the collection of hymns made for the Universalists, by the Rev. George Richards, in 1792. For several years he was chaplain in the United States Navy, after-

ward becoming a settled pastor. He wrote a number of hymns, including the one, still occasionally sung, opening with the stanzas:

"O Christ, what gracious words,
Are ever, ever thine;
Thy voice is music to the soul,
And life and peace divine.

"Good, everlasting good,
Glad tidings full of joy,
Flow from thy lips, the lips of truth,
And flow without alloy."

Here again, in this collection, while there is an absence of the terrifying, the great doctrines of the evangelical faith receive full emphasis. For example, the reality of human guilt and the divine remedy are set forth in such lines as these:

"Ye scarlet-color'd sinners come;
Jesus the Lord, invites you home."

In his preface, Mr. Richards said: "Most of the Hymns in this little volume are inscribed to his [Jesus'] solemn praise; for the worthiness of the Lamb is the only theme of heaven, and ought to be the only theme on earth."

These and other hymn books of the so-called "liberal faith," expressed the growing revolt against certain teachings of the older theology, but the nineteenth century was well advanced before the churches at large began to discard the harsh severity of the earlier days.

CHAPTER V

THE OLD-TIME SINGING

To sing or not to sing?—was a live question among the early settlers in New England. It was not a controversy over secular songs, for by general consent these were tabooed as inventions of the devil. Nor was there any argument over the use of hymns of "human composure" such as arose in a heated form at a later time. In those primitive days there were very few such hymns in existence, and whether few or many, no one for a moment would have dared to suggest that they be used in public worship. The Psalms were inspired from on high, and it would have been a profanation of the house of God to introduce man-made hymns.

But whether it was right to sing even the Psalms was matter of disagreement. To be sure, most of the people favored it, but a respectable and outspoken minority was opposed. These "Antipsalmists," as they were called, offered all manner of objections. Did not Paul say specifically, "making melody in your *hearts*"? No mention of "lips." Moreover, suppose an unbeliever should chance to be in the congregation and

should make bold to sing holy words—what sacrilege! Or in an unguarded moment a female might join in with the males, and then the apostolic injunction that the "women keep silence in the Churches" would be disobeyed. "By no means," said they, "let there be singing in the house of God!"

But there were champions on the other side. We have already referred to the preface to the Bay Psalm Book by Richard Mather, and also to the tract on this subject written by Rev. John Cotton in 1647. Both men were clear and emphatic. Mr. Cotton said: "Wee lay downe this conclusion for a Doctrine of Truth: *That singing* of Psalms with a lively *voyce, is an holy Duty of God's Worship.*" He took up all the objections and answered them so completely that gradually the protests died out.

But although Psalm-singing was an accepted part of the service in most of the New England Churches, its quality was nothing to boast of. Some of the early Pilgrims had learned to sing by note before crossing the sea. Speaking of the company that came over in the Mayflower, Governor Winslow said: "Wee refreshed ourselves with singing of psalms, making joyful melody in our hearts as well as with the voyce, there being many of our congregation very expert in music, and indeed it was the sweetest

music that mine ears ever heard." They tried to teach their children and grandchildren, but New England life in those days was a severe and oft-times a desperate struggle for existence, and music was neglected.

With the descendants of the original Pilgrims and the Puritans alike, the downward trend was rapid and inevitable. Many of the Psalm-tunes which the Fathers brought over with them were entirely forgotten, and for long years not half a dozen tunes were capable of being sung by the average congregation; and even those few, in the absence of all rule and method, became so corrupted that no two persons sang them alike. Music was at low ebb. We know that as late as 1673, and probably still later, there was not a single musician by profession in all New England. The time had not yet come in this new land for the cultivation of the fine arts.

Nor did the version of the Psalms in common use lend itself to enthusiastic singing. In the Bay Psalm Book, a small number of the Psalms were in Long Meter, a few in the so-called Hallelujah Meter, or four lines of six syllables and four of four syllables, and all the rest, fully ninety per cent, were in Common Meter. Such wearisome sameness was depressing to begin with. Then many of the Psalms were of excessive length, running as high as one hundred and thirty

lines, nor under any circumstances might a Psalm be divided.

It was the custom to line out the Psalms. This was known as "deaconing," as it was done by one of the deacons appointed for the purpose, and nothing more monotonous can be imagined than the dull sing-song style in which the lines were usually read. This custom of singing a line at a time broke up the music into disconnected fragments, so that occasionally a congregation became sidetracked and ended with another tune than the one "pitched" at the start.

As time went on conditions grew steadily worse. Rev. Thomas Walter, writing early in the eighteenth century, made this indignant comment: "Our tunes are left to the Mercy of every unskilful Throat to chop and alter, to twist and change, according to their infinitely divers and no less Odd Humours and Fancies. I have myself paused twice in one note to take breath. No two Men in the Congregation quaver alike or together, it sounds in the Ears of a Good Judge like *five hundred* different Tunes roared out at the same Time, with perpetual Interfearings with one another." The drawling went to such a length that it took half an hour to sing one of the longer Psalms, the people standing all that time. It is related of the eminent Dr. West that one Sabbath morning, after beginning the service, he

discovered that he had forgotten to bring with him the manuscript of his sermon. Not in the least disturbed, he gave out a Psalm, quietly slipped from the pulpit, walked to the parsonage, a quarter of a mile distant, and was back in his place long before the Psalm was finished.

A glaring illustration of the depth of musical ignorance among the New England colonists of two hundred years ago, is the fact that many people had never heard of such a thing as singing by note. It came as a startling, and too often an offensive, revelation, that a congregation could actually begin and close a verse together. As a rule each worshiper was a law unto himself, singing his own tune and in his own time, with little or no regard to anyone else. The ministers were educated men and represented the highest culture of the community, and they deplored the awful condition of church-singing. They earnestly exhorted the people to mend their ways, but with such poor results that in many parishes it became an open question whether it would not be to the glory of God to abandon song altogether. And yet no more striking evidence could be found of the natural devoutness of the Puritan mind than the fact that Psalm-singing in home and church, wretched as it might be, was a genuine means of grace. Husbandman or traveler, in field or road, who caught the sound of a Psalm-

tune, instinctively removed his hat and bowed his head, as in the presence of God.

At last there began a change for the better. One of the leaders in the reform was the Rev. Thomas Walter. He had graduated from Harvard, and become assistant to his father, who was pastor at Roxbury. We have already seen what he thought of the lamentable state of affairs all over New England. Dark as the outlook was, he determined, with the zeal of youth, to make a supreme effort at improvement. In 1721 he wrote a book entitled, *The grounds and rules of musick explained; or, An introduction to the art of singing by note.* It made a great stir and did good by setting the people to thinking and talking. The year before Walter's book appeared, another champion of a better way, the Rev. Thomas Symmes, pastor at Bradford, wrote an essay on "The Reasonableness of Regular Singing," in which he made caustic comment on the "great indecency" with which this part of the service was conducted. Replying to those who insisted upon the old paths, because, forsooth, the fathers had used them, he gave this interesting bit of information: "There are many persons of credit now living, children and grandchildren of the *first* settlers of New England, who can very well remember that their ancestors sung by *note,* and they learned to sing of them."

Over this question of "singing by rule" a heated controversy raged for years. It was a subject of fiery discussion in home and in church. Some parishes were almost rent in pieces. Even Bradford, in spite of the presence and influence of Mr. Symmes, was a center of excitement. He sadly recorded the fact that "A great part of the town has for near half a year, been in a mere flame about it." One indignant objector to the new method wrote a letter of protest which was printed in the *New England Chronicle*: "Truly I have a great jealousy that if we begin to *sing* by *rule,* the next thing will be to *pray* by rule and *preach* by rule, and *then comes popery.*" Here we have the secret of much of the opposition to a change. While some were so utterly void of all musical sense, and so blindly devoted to what they had always been accustomed to, that the most hopeless confusion and discord sounded sweet to their ears, many others lived in mortal dread of even the remotest hint of an approach to any of the hated forms and ceremonies of Rome. Better far the vilest singing or none at all, than anything which in the least savored of the practice of anti-Christ. The excitement continued for years, especially in the small towns and rural districts. Sermons and books and pamphlets favoring the change followed each other in rapid succession. In 1723, Mr. Symmes sent out a second appeal,

and this time went so far as to urge the opening of singing schools, where young people could learn to sing by note.

Slowly but surely the reform gained headway. Presently help came from an unexpected quarter. "It was in the latter part of December, (1734) that the Spirit of God began extraordinarily to set in, and wonderfully to work among us." Thus wrote Jonathan Edwards in his Narrative of the Great Awakening. It is a significant fact that revivals of religion have almost always been marked by outbursts of song. In the sixteenth century, the psalms and hymns of Luther became so popular that Romanists complained that the whole nation was singing itself into the Lutheran doctrine, and when the movement spread into England it was bitterly referred to by the papal party as "an infectious frenzy of sacred song." No feature of the evangelical revival under the Wesleys was more conspicuous than the singing by the people.

When the Great Awakening began in New England, it was quickly seen that the old style of Psalm-singing, in vogue for a hundred years, would never meet the new conditions. The rapturous joy of a newly found faith was bound to express itself, albeit time-honored forms were scattered to the winds. The church at Northampton, of which Edwards was the pastor,

though almost on the western frontier, was the strongest in New England, in wealth and numbers, outside of Boston. It was also quite exceptional in the quality of its singing. With pardonable pride the pastor could say: "Our Congregation excelled all that ever I knew in the external part of the duty before [the revival began], the men generally carrying regularly and well three parts of music and the women a part by themselves"—a marvel for those days. But after the new spirit came upon the church, "Our public praises were then greatly enlivened"; the people "were evidently wont to sing with unusual elevation of heart and voice, which made the duty pleasant indeed." Psalm-singing in the homes was revived, and such was the enthusiasm that groups went about the streets singing, to the scandal of the more sober-minded.

The Awakening extended far and wide, reaching more than one hundred and fifty towns, and wherever it went there was the same story of the people "abounding in the divine exercise" of singing. Critics complained of a lack of reverence and decorum; they found fault because in the new order of things song was given so prominent a place in public worship; but most of all were they offended because under the influence of the revival, hymns of "human composure" were being introduced. Watts' hymns were first

reprinted in America in 1739, and met with immediate favor wherever the revival had gone. They were singable, as the Bay Psalm versions, for the most part, were not; and, unlike the latter, they responded to the eager heart-cravings of the converts. Happily, in all these matters Jonathan Edwards was a progressive. He welcomed the improvement in singing, and while he uttered a word of caution, he by no means repressed the exuberance of the people. He loved the Psalm Book and stoutly resisted the tendency in some places to entirely displace it, but he added, "I know of no obligation we are under to *confine* ourselves to it." He was quite fearless in saying that it was "really *needful* that we should have some other songs than the Psalms of David." Thus it was that the Great Awakening became a very important factor in aiding the reform in church singing in New England, which got under way in the first half of the eighteenth century.

The victory of the reformers led to several innovations. As "singing by rule" came to be the custom, it was soon found desirable to organize singing schools. The idea was immensely popular, especially among the young people. It gave them an opportunity, so long denied, to develop their musical talents, and, what doubtless was even more pleasing to many, it afforded a bit of diversion. How much this meant back in those

stern old Puritan days, when the stricter Churchmen looked askance at the most harmless pleasures, it is difficult for us to realize. Social intercourse was very limited, and there was but little to break the dull monotony of daily life. On the Sabbath the services were long and wearisome; to be sure, the people came together, but woe unto the uncircumcised of heart who in an unguarded moment forgot the solemn restraints of that holy day! On Thursday evening, old and young gathered for the mid-week lecture, most likely on one of the Five Points of Calvinism, or a kindred theme—not exactly a diversion! So it was, that when singing schools were introduced they received an enthusiastic welcome. Were they not for the glory of God's service? This silenced most critics. Care was taken to find a suitable meeting place. One of the old masters laid down this rule: "Choose a large, tight room, if possible, where a little fire will answer, for large fires are hurtful to the voice."

The logical outcome of the singing school was the choir, and this in turn did away with the time-honored custom of "deaconing" the hymns, a custom which grew up at a period when Psalm Books were scarce and some were unable to read. Usually a prominent deacon was chosen for this important task of lining-out the hymn or Psalm. It was also his duty to set the tune, which, in the

absence of any musical instrument, was by no means a simple matter. We read in colonial annals that the eminent jurist, Samuel Sewall, afterward chief-justice of Massachusetts, was appointed to this worthy office in the church of which he was a member. While occasionally his *Diary* records with pride that he "set the psalm well," he frequently had his trials. Under date of December 28th, 1705, we have the following entry: "Mr. Willard Preaches very excellently. Spake to me to set the Tune; I intended Windsor, and fell into High-Dutch, and then essaying to set another Tune, went into a Key much too high. So I pray'd Mr. White to set it." Unseemly levity broke out among the worldly, and the saints were scandalized. The good deacon went home overwhelmed with shame and sorrow. In his *Diary* he added, "The Lord humble me and Instruct me, that I should be occasion of any Interruption in the Worship of God."

It was scenes like this that hastened the coming of choirs, and yet in every church there were some who stoutly opposed any change. One old leader who had attempted to "deacon" the Psalm as usual, and had been sung down by the newly-installed choir, waited till they were done, and then calmly took his revenge. He arose, opened his Psalm Book, and announced, *"Now* let the *people of the Lord sing!"* After prolonged con-

troversy it was finally voted to adopt the new plan in the Meeting House in Worcester, Massachusetts. But the historian relates that on "the Sabbath succeeding, after the hymn had been read by the minister, the aged and venerable Deacon Chamberlain, unwilling to desert the custom of his fathers, rose and read the first line according to the usual practice. The singers, prepared to carry the alteration into effect, proceeded without pausing at the conclusion. The white-haired officer of the church, with the full power of his voice, read on, until the louder notes of the collected body overpowered the attempt to resist the progress of improvement, and the deacon, deeply mortified at the triumph of musical reformation, seized his hat, and retired from the meeting-house in tears." With merciless glee his foes pressed their advantage. "His conduct was censured by the church, and he was for a time deprived of its communion, for absenting himself from the public services of the Sabbath."

The trouble was widespread, nearly every community being more or less involved, and in some places the bitterness continued for years. It was inevitable that the progressives should finally win out, but in many churches, especially in the rural districts, the old custom of lining out the hymns lingered till the middle of the last century.

Nor are we to suppose that the reformers had no trials of their own. The choirs were volunteer and frequently their singing was wretched. More than once, in utter despair, the minister was driven to open rebuke, like the Rev. T. Bellamy, of whom it is related that after a peculiarly atrocious performance, he read another Psalm, and then called to his choir: "You must try again, for it is impossible to preach after such singing!"

No minister in New England strove more zealously to develop a good choir than did William Bentley, for many years pastor of the well-known East Church, Salem, Massachusetts. He was a Harvard graduate, he understood music, and he wanted respectable singing; but what difficulties he met with! His diaries are full of entries like this: "Most wretched fate attends our singing. But few present this evening. We proposed to shut the school entirely." Then came a fresh start. "This evening, for the first time, our new Singing School was opened. Forty youths of both sexes appeared, and with the addition of some old scattered singers a good prospect opens." But there was no money even to buy the needed music. "The sums to be appropriated are such as remain after my salary is paid. The salary for no one year ever was paid, therefore no such sums remain." On slight provocation the choir would strike; then the weary comment:

"This [Sun] day without singing." The disorder was scandalous. "The disgust [in the congregation] is increasing. Our ancestors sung from devotion—but what is a choir, without decency of manners, without any conception of religion," etc. And all this in one of the leading churches of the day! Quite evident that our forbears had troubles of their own with the church music!

In 1770, there appeared in Boston a book entitled *The New England Psalm Singer.* It was by William Billings, an eccentric genius, who, in spite of his oddities, was destined to make a deep and lasting impression on musical history in this country. His personal appearance was against him. He used to be called the American Cyclops, because he was blind in one eye. One leg was shorter than the other and one of his arms was partly withered. But none of these things, nor the fact that he came from very humble parentage, disturbed him. He followed the trade of tanner, but he reveled in music, and this became his real business. He was self-taught, happily so, for the schools would have spoiled him. While working in the tannery, he was constantly humming some new tune. He kept a piece of chalk at hand, and whenever a striking melody occurred to him, he would at once write it down cn the wall or on a side of leather.

Billings came to be known as the Father of New England Psalmody. For fifty years the colonists had been gradually improving their church music, and now the time was ripe for a more decided advance. Watts' Psalms and Hymns were coming into general use, and there was a growing demand for a greater variety of tunes, and tunes with more life and movement. When Billings' *Psalm Singer* appeared, it made a sensation. Though not a musician in a technical sense, he understood the popular craving, and he knew how to produce melodies that delighted the people and that set them to singing as they had never sung before. More than this, he was an ardent patriot, and those were patriotic times. One hundred and fifty years had passed since the Mayflower brought over the first Pilgrims, and young America had found herself and was already preparing to declare her independence.

At this critical juncture our tanner-musician appeared. Francis Hopkinson and James Lyon, both of Philadelphia, had already written some melodies which had found limited use, but never before had a New Englander attempted to compose tunes. Billings was a pioneer, and his *Psalm Singer,* with its forceful originality, struck a new note and strongly appealed to the national pride. All through the following years its author was at the forefront in the struggle for freedom.

Patriotic songs were few, and so Billings borrowed what he could and wrote some of his own. He often paraphrased Psalms, adapting them to present conditions, as the 137th Psalm, "By the rivers of Babylon we sat down and wept," which he changed to "By the rivers of Watertown we sat down and wept, when we remember thee, O Boston!" The British were occupying Boston at the time. The song beginning with the following lines, written by him and sung to his own tune of Chester, was called the Battle Hymn of the Revolution, and was almost as famous in its day as the Battle Hymn of the Republic at a later time:

"Let tyrants shake their iron rods,
And Slavery clank her galling chains,
We see them not, we trust in God,
New England's God forever reigns.

"The foe comes on with haughty stride,
Our troops advance with martial noise;
Their veterans flee before our arms,
And generals yield to beardless boys."

Everywhere, in church and home, by the children and the aged, these words were sung with passionate fervor. The soldiers knew them by heart, and to the sound of fife and drum they sang them as they advanced to meet the foe. This Battle Hymn contributed not a little to the winning of the war.

The Psalm Singer opened a new era for Psalmody in the colonies. It was so different from anything that had gone before. The variety, the animation, the exuberant freedom of movement, accorded well with the new spirit of independence. Billings' Psalm tunes were not only favorites in the church service; the soldiers loved them and they were sung in camp and on the battle-field.

The new style of hymn-music which he introduced and for which he is best remembered, known as the "fuguing-tune," had come over from England. "In these tunes," says Professor Peter C. Lutkin, "instead of the four parts singing together in the ordinary way, one part would lead off with an animated phrase, which would be imitated in one or more of the remaining parts, somewhat after the style of a fugue." And so Billings called his book the *Fuguing Psalm Singer.* He defended the innovation with great spirit. "It has more than twenty times the power of the old slow tunes. Now the solemn bass demands the attention, next the manly tenor, now the lofty counter, now the volatile treble. Now here! Now there! Now here again! Oh ecstatic, push on, ye sons of harmony." His own enthusiasm became contagious. The new style swept through the colonial towns and villages like wildfire.

What greatly helped Billings was the fact that he himself was a singer. He had a stentorian voice, and was never so happy as when leading a chorus. He threw himself with amazing energy into the development of singing schools and choirs, and his concerts, for those days, were the marvel of the musical world. He introduced various novel features which appealed to the popular mind, as in training the singers to suit their actions to their words, so that when, for example, they sang, "O clap your hands!" they all broke out in vigorous handclapping. He believed that church music ought not to be the lifeless and even lugubrious exercise that it was so often made. A Psalm was not necessarily a dirge. He boldly called one of his books the *Psalm Singer's Amusement*. He was the first to introduce the bass viol (violoncello) into the church service, to the consternation of many. It is no wonder that some of his innovations were bitterly resented. It must be conceded that his system of fuguing was not always a means of grace. The repetition of a word or syllable occasionally led to startling results. Thus the words

> "With reverence let the saints appear
> And bow before the Lord,"

were forced to be sung, "and bow-wow-wow, and bow-ow-ow," and so on till all the parts had "bow-

wowed" in turn. We cannot help feeling a bit of sympathy for the minister, who, on the Sunday after his choir had rendered this anthem, vigorously denounced the whole new-fangled system, enforcing his protest with this text from Amos, "The songs of the temple shall be turned into howling."

But in spite of his eccentricities, musical and otherwise, Billings had powerful supporters. So eminent a citizen as Samuel Adams did not hesitate, on occasion, to stand side by side with him in a church choir or in a concert chorus, and many other prominent men believed in him and publicly encouraged him, while his popularity among the rank and file of the people was unquestioned. He was a crude genius, but he aroused a musical spirit which moved all New England, and which left a permanent impress on the music of our American churches.

Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe gives an animated description of the scene when, as a little girl, she used to go to the church in Litchfield, Connecticut, where her father was pastor, and listen to "the execution of those good old billowy compositions called fuguing tunes, when the four parts that compose the choir take up the song, and go racing around one after another, each singing a different set of words, till at length, by some inexplicable magic, they all come together

again, and sail smoothly out into a rolling sea of harmony! I remember the wonder with which I used to look from side to side when treble, tenor, counter, and bass were thus roaring and foaming, and it verily seemed to me as if the psalm were going to pieces among the breakers, and the delighted astonishment with which I found that each particular verse did emerge whole and uninjured from the storm."

CHAPTER VI

THE KIST O' WHISTLES AND ITS COMPANIONS

When our Puritan forefathers came to New England they brought few if any musical instruments with them. Such means of diversion were fraught with peril if used on any occasion, and as for bringing them into a church service, that would have been shocking beyond words. The nearest approach to anything of the kind was in the call to worship, when the one appointed to that duty rang out the summons by horn or conch-shell or on the drum, as the old lines put it:

"New England's Sabbath day
Is heavenlike, still and pure,
When Israel walks the way
Up to the Temple's door.
The time we tell
When there to come
By beat of drum
Or sounding shell."

The feeling on this side of the water generally reflected in a belated form the spirit of the Mother Country. It was over there that the time presently came when anti-Romish wrath turned upon the church organ, the Scotchman's "Kist o' Whistles," or "the devil's bagpipe," as the Englishman called it. Many organs were destroyed,

and musicians were driven out of the choir gallery at the point of the soldiers' pikes. No doubt it would have been the same here, only the offending instrument had not yet crossed the ocean. But before many years the question of organs in churches became a very live one among the colonists, and for more than a century it continued to be the center of more or less bitter controversy. When a few New England progressives hinted a desire for an organ, they were sternly suppressed by the eminent Cotton Mather, who solemnly argued that if organs were permitted, other instruments would soon follow, and then there would come dancing!

But at last the strongest ban proved ineffective. "I was at Mr. Thomas Brattles, heard ye organ and saw strange things in a microscope." Thus wrote Rev. Joseph Green in his diary in 1711. This Thomas Brattle was treasurer of Harvard College and a leading citizen of Boston. He was very fond of music, and he imported an organ from England—the first in America—and set it up in his own house. He died in 1713, and in his will the organ was bequeathed to the Brattle Street Church, of which he had been one of the founders. Fearing, however, that the gift might not be accepted, he provided that in the event of rejection by the Brattle Street people, it should go to the King's Chapel,

which, being of the Church of England, had no scruples in such matters. To the King's Chapel it went, and the direction of the will was carried out, to at once "procure a sober person that can play skilfully thereon with a loud noise." This historic organ, after rendering valuable service in various places, found its way to Saint John's Church, Portsmouth, New Hampshire, where it is now carefully preserved.

The second organ to be set up in New England was the one presented by the celebrated Bishop Berkeley to Trinity Episcopal Church of Newport, Rhode Island. It was a very fine instrument, made in London, and continued in use for one hundred and eleven years.

But though the demand for better music was becoming increasingly insistent, the non-Episcopal Churches were very reluctant to admit organs. An English gentleman made an offer of £500 to the first "dissenting" church that would venture on the innovation. According to Dr. Ezra Stiles, at that time pastor at Newport, it was not till 1770 that the break came. His diary, under date of July 10th of that year, tells us that on the preceding Sunday an organ was played in the Congregational church at Providence, and that this was the first instance of such music in a "dissenting" church in all British America.

Finally the Brattle Street Church surrendered

to the inevitable and decided to have an organ, but even after the order had been sent to England and the instrument was on its way, the congregation was torn with bitter strife. One wealthy member besought with tears that the house of God be not desecrated, promising to refund the entire cost of the organ if the evil thing might be thrown to the bottom of Boston harbor. But gradually opposition subsided. Some churches that could not afford a regular instrument contented themselves with small hand organs, made in Europe, and "calculated," so the old advertisement read, "to play all tunes usually sung in places of worship, with interludes to each Psalm, without the assistance of an organist."

Although for many years organs continued to be imported, Americans early began to show their constructive skill. The first instrument to be built on this side was probably the one erected in 1737, in Trinity Church, New York, by John Gottlob Klemm, the Moravian organ-builder, who had recently arrived in this country. A few years later one was finished in Boston by Edward Bromfield, Jr. He was a Harvard graduate and died when only twenty-three. His achievement was referred to with glowing pride by Rev. Thomas Prince, who at the time was pastor of the Old South Church. "As he was well skilled in music, he for exercise and recreation,

with his own hands, has made a most accurate Organ, with two rows of keys and many hundred pipes. The workmanship—surprisingly nice and curious, exceeding anything of the kind that ever came here from England."

For a long period Boston and Philadelphia surpassed New York as musical centers. In Philadelphia, as in New England, there was bitter opposition to organs. The Quakers were numerous and they would tolerate no music whatever in their services. The Presbyterians sang Psalms, but for many years they allowed no instrument. It is cheering, however, to know that there was at least one Presbyterian in the City of Brotherly Love who appreciated good music and who wanted it in church. In 1763 he wrote a curious little pamphlet in which, with startling frankness, he freed his mind of the disgust he felt for "those groveling souls" who objected to instrumental music, the organ in particular. He quotes an "eminent Divine" who had recently told his audience that there were but "Three Kinds of Beings that he knew of, whom God had endowed with Animal Sensation, who were not charm'd with the Harmony of Musick, and they were the Devil, a Quaker, and an Ass." But he declares that Presbyterians and Baptists ought to be included, forasmuch as the "miserable manner in

which this Part of their Worship is droll'ed out, seems rather to imitate the Braying of Asses, than the divine Melody so often recommended in Scripture." He points to Saint Paul's Church, which had an organ, and "though it is said to be the largest building erected for the public worship of God on the Continent, such multitudes flock thither, of all Denominations, as very frequently not to find room." He adds that the other two Episcopal churches of the city, Christ and Saint Peter's, were even then raising money to install "very genteel" organs in their places of worship, "and many in the country are following their laudable example."

The instrument in Christ Church, where in later years Washington had a pew, was finished in 1766, and it was the musical wonder of the city. Francis Hopkinson, secretary of the Continental Congress and himself a composer, delighted to listen to it, and falling into verse he describes how

> " . . . . noble to the sight,
> The gilded organ rears its towering height";

and again, and when the full power is used,

> "The marble pavements seem to feel their doom,
> And the bones rattle in each hollow tomb."

Saint Joseph's Roman Catholic Church, the oldest of that faith in the city, where Lafayette

and other French officers occasionally worshiped in Revolutionary times, introduced an organ as early as 1748. It was natural that the liturgical churches, with their more elaborate musical service, should be the first to feel the need of musical instruments.

When at last the Presbyterians began to yield, bitter feelings were aroused. An aged clergyman, who happened to be visiting at a church where an organ had recently been installed, was asked to lead in prayer, just as the organ-led singing ceased. Bursting with indignation, he cried out, "Call on the machine! If it can sing and play to the glory of God, it can pray to the glory of God also. Call on the machine!"

The organ, however, was not the only instrument which found slow admission to the colonial churches. There was that innocent little contrivance known as the "pitch-pipe." It was in the shape of a box, six or eight inches long, about four inches wide, and an inch thick, with a mouthpiece at one end, and on the inside a slide that moved up and down. It was used to obtain the pitch and made its appearance about the time that choirs began to be organized, especially in New England. Nothing more harmless could be imagined, but so strong was the feeling in many churches against any sort of musical instrument in the Lord's House, that the pitch-pipe

had to be smuggled into the choir gallery and used with utmost stealth. In one case, indeed, the church deacons yielded so far as to permit a bass viol to accompany the singer, but only after the solemn assurance of its owner that he had named it "The Godly Viol," since he had never used it except to play Psalm tunes. Many deacons, however, were not so easily persuaded. If it came to argument, the proof-text that settled matters was at hand; the final appeal was to the Word of the Lord through Amos, "I will not hear the melody of thy viols"; though how they could continue to sing when the very same verse said, "Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs," does not appear.

In a certain church where some of the members were eager for a violin, albeit the pastor was bitterly opposed to it, the proposition was gravely made to alter the familiar lines of Watts,

> "Oh, let my heart in tune be found
> Like David's harp, of solemn sound,"

so as to accord with the new plan:

> "Oh, may my heart be tuned within
> Like David's sacred violin."

"Nay," retorted the indignant domine, "say rather,

> "Oh, may my heart go diddle-diddle
> Like Uncle David's sacred fiddle!"

It is, however, gratifying to know that in colonial America there was at least one veritable garden spot in the matter of church music. This was at Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, the episcopal seat of the Moravians. These people, with so many of the features of the primitive church, were at the same time leaders in musical culture. Without the slightest hesitation, they used in their services, besides the organ, brass and stringed instruments, such as the trumpet, trombone, clarionet, harp, violin, and bass viol. Conservatives in some of the other churches were shocked beyond measure, but the Moravians continued on their way with a happy conscience.

In colonial days American Methodists were a feeble folk. When organized in 1766 they were only a handful. For many years their lack of means, if nothing else, would have made impossible the purchase of organs for their churches. But in fact the hostility, on both sides of the sea, to anything of the kind among the followers of Wesley, was so pronounced that the nineteenth century was far advanced before a more progressive spirit dared to show itself. In commenting on the woe pronounced by Amos on those who "chant to the sound of the viol, and invent to themselves instruments of music," Dr. Adam Clarke said: "Music, *as a science,* I esteem and admire; but instruments of music *in the house of*

God I abominate and abhor. This is the abuse of music; and I here register my protest against all such corruptions in the worship of the Author of Christianity." And he quoted John Wesley as having said, "I have no objection to instruments of music in our chapels, provided they are neither *heard nor seen.*" It should be said, however, for Wesley that his general attitude on this subject was more liberal than that of Dr. Clarke. Organs in churches of the Established Communion seemed to receive his cordial approval; it was to the introduction of instrumental music into the less formal meeting places of his own people that he objected.

But the early Methodists made up for the lack of instruments with their voices. They knew how to sing, and they sang with a fervency, a soulful sincerity, that impressed all who heard them. John Adams attended the Continental Congress which was held in Philadelphia in the fall of 1774. In his diary, under date of Sunday, October 23, we find this entry: "In the evening, I went to the Methodist meeting" (which must have been at the old Saint George's Church) "and heard Mr. Webb, the old soldier. . . . The singing here is very sweet and soft indeed; the first [finest] music I have heard in any society, except the Moravian, and once at church with the organ."

Doubtless there were many in all the communions, who in secret if not openly, sympathized with the attitude of the venerable Bishop White of the Protestant Episcopal Church. He sturdily championed good music, and at the same time issued a warning against prevalent dangers, especially condemning "the licentiousness—conspicuous in some places, in those light airs, which are calculated to send people dancing out of church."

CHAPTER VII

SOME EARLY HYMN BOOKS

Reference has already been made to several early collections, and still others merit our attention. As we have said in a previous chapter, very often a hymn book reflects in a remarkable way not only the thought and feeling of the compiler, but the state of religious sentiment and belief at the time it was prepared. We have spoken of the book edited by President Dwight and published in 1801. In addition to the new version of the Psalms, there was an appendix of two hundred and sixty-three hymns. If Dr. Dwight had been left perfectly free the number would have been still larger. But the fact that so many were included, and that the book was received with great favor, shows what an advance had been made since the days when an attempt to introduce into public worship a hymn of "human composure" would have been angrily denounced. The time had come, whether anyone dared to confess it or not, when Psalm-singing palled on the taste of many good people, and when everybody was ready to admit that David was not the only person whom God had inspired to write hymns suitable for public praise. It is indicative,

however, of the cautious spirit which prevailed, that in Dwight's book the emphasis is laid on the Psalms, and the hymns are merely "annexed."

Of the two hundred and sixty-three hymns mentioned, it is not surprising that one hundred and sixty-eight are from Watts; the significant fact being that ninety-five are by other writers. The almost exclusive hold which Watts had maintained on the churches was being relaxed. It is also noticeable that only one of Charles Wesley's hymns is used, and this is credited to "Rippon," the English collection from which it was taken. It may have been due in part to theological differences, which would lead a Calvinistic compiler to hesitate to draw from an Arminian source, that the Wesleys were passed by. But even more it may be accounted for by a strange and persistent ignorance on the part of highly intelligent people, especially in America, of the riches of Wesleyan hymnody.

Most of Dwight's selections, aside from Watts, were from a very small group, Samuel Stennett, Doddridge, Newton, Cowper, Beddome, Fawcett, and Anne Steele. And more than once a writer's best hymns were passed over. Toplady's collection was drawn upon, but "Rock of Ages" was not chosen. Very scanty musical variety was provided. With the exception of four six-line hymns, to which no meters were as-

signed, all the hymns were to be sung to the Proper, the Common, the Long, or the Short Meter. And yet, with all its limitations, from our point of view, Dwight's book met with great favor, and when referring to it nearly a quarter of a century later, Nettleton noted the fact that it was still "in extensive circulation."

Two years before the publication of President Dwight's Revision, there appeared a collection which remains "one of the landmarks of New England Hymnody," known as *The Hartford Selection of Hymns.* It was prepared chiefly by Nathan Strong, pastor of the First Church, Hartford. He and Timothy Dwight had been classmates at Yale, where he made a brilliant record. In 1773, when a young man of twenty-five, he became pastor of the oldest and largest church in Connecticut. So great was his success that he remained there for forty-three years, till his death in 1816. He was a compendium of learning; indeed, when he graduated from college, President Stiles declared that he was "the most universal scholar he ever knew." He could write a weighty theological treatise and preach profound sermons. But we think of him chiefly for his power in presenting Jesus Christ as the Saviour of men. He was an evangelist in the best sense of the word.

Toward the close of the eighteenth century, as

the country quieted down, following the turmoil of the Revolution and of the decade that followed, the thought of the people turned more and more toward God, and the signs increased that a widespread religious movement had already begun. No one was in closer sympathy with it than Nathan Strong, in his position of conspicuous influence. He had been receiving many into his church and was destined to have still greater accessions. He possessed the happy faculty of touching the hearts of men in a most persuasive way. On one occasion, while a revival was in progress at First Church, a fellow clergyman who was present said to Dr. Strong, with deep emotion, "Why do the influences of the Holy Spirit attend your preaching so much more than mine, when our congregations are so much alike, and we preach the same system of truth?" Said Dr. Strong: "The reason is that *you* present Gospel truth as a proposition to be proved; whereas *I* endeavor to exhibit it as something already admitted, and to impress it upon the heart and conscience." While in the midst of a great revival, conscious that the divine Spirit was abroad among the people, he became so profoundly stirred that for weeks, as he said to a friend, he "did not have an hour of uninterrupted sleep at a time."

The Hartford Selection was born in this spir-

itual atmosphere, and responded to a definite need. Many felt that the hymns and Psalms of Watts were not adapted to revival services. On every hand a call arose for a collection of a different type. The Hartford booksellers, to whom most of the appeals came, consulted the local pastors, and it was finally decided to prepare a new book. The task was committed to three men, but Dr. Strong did most of the work. *The Hartford Selection,* as it was called, appeared in 1799. It contained three hundred and seventy-eight hymns, and several were by Dr. Strong himself.

As we would expect, the note of solemn warning is frequently sounded, but there is an absence of those cruder attempts to arouse sinners through the piling of terror upon terror in the language of affright. Dr. Strong speaks in these lines:

"The summer harvest spreads the field,
Mark how the whitening hills are turned!
Behold them to the reapers yield;—
The wheat is saved—the tares are burned.

"Thus the great Judge with glory crowned,
Descends to reap the ripened earth!
Angelic guards attend him down,
The same who sang his humble birth.

. . . . . .

"Thus ends the harvest of the earth:
Angels obey the awful voice;
They save the wheat, they burn the chaff;
All heaven approves the sovereign choice."

But Dr. Strong's hymns are not all of a revival character. Two of his best are Thanksgiving Hymns. The following has been in common use:

"Almighty Sovereign of the skies,
To thee let songs of gladness rise,
Each grateful heart its tribute bring,
And every voice thy goodness sing.

"From thee our choicest blessings flow,
Life, health, and strength, thy hands bestow,
The daily good thy creatures share,
Springs from thy providential care.

"Let every power of heart and tongue,
Unite to swell the grateful song,
While age and youth in chorus join,
And praise the Majesty divine."

This next hymn, from the same pen, suited to Thanksgiving or Independence Day, is still frequently sung:

"Swell the anthem, raise the song;
Praises to our God belong;
Saints and angels join to sing
Praises to the heavenly King.
Blessings from his liberal hand
Flow around this happy land:
Kept by him, no foes annoy;
Peace and freedom we enjoy.

"Here, beneath a virtuous sway,
May we cheerfully obey;
Never feel oppression's rod,
Ever own and worship God.

Hark! the voice of nature sings
Praises to the King of kings;
Let us join the choral song,
And the grateful notes prolong."

The Hartford Selection gained widespread popularity and was in constant use for many years. The statement was made in 1833 that:[1] "It has been printed in greater numbers, has been diffused more extensively, and has imparted more alarm to the sinner, and more consolation to the saint, than any other compilation of religious odes in this country, during a period of nearly thirty years." Dr. Strong died on Christmas day, 1816, less than three weeks before his classmate, President Dwight.

While *The Hartford Selection* had a wide circulation and served an admirable purpose, especially in churches where the revival spirit was active, Dwight's book had not been published many years, before pastors began to complain that its collection of hymns, two hundred and sixty-three altogether, and only ninety-five by writers other than Watts, was too limited. In 1815 Dr. Samuel Worcester undertook to respond to the call for an enlarged hymn book. He was an eminent Congregational clergyman, the leader in founding the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions—the oldest of

[1] Quoted by Dr. L. F. Benson in The English Hymn, p. 373.

the large denominational Boards in this country—and was its first corresponding secretary. His name on the title page of any book would carry great weight. His plan was admirable. He decided to publish a volume in four parts, the first two parts given over to Watts' Psalms and Hymns, the third to consist of a much-enlarged selection of hymns from other writers, and the fourth to be made up of a *Select Harmony*—tunes to accompany the hymns.

We must bear in mind that the custom of printing the music with the words had not yet come in. The worshipers in the pews were supposed to sing the air—usually familiar—and therefore to need only the words. For the benefit of the choir, separate Tune Books were published, with such pleasing titles as, *The Chorister's Guide, The Sacred Minstrel, American Harmony, The Worshipper's Assistant.* Sometimes arrangements were made to have a special book of tunes to accompany a particular hymn collection. This was done in the case of Dr. Dwight's hymn book, when the high-sounding *Harmonia Coelestis* was published. In the same way the modest *Zion's Harp* was gotten out to go with the *Village Hymns.* Occasionally small groups of tunes had been bound up with Psalms and hymns, but Worcester's plan was more elaborate and more nearly approached a modern hymnal.

In order to make room for the added hymns and the tunes, he omitted a number of Watts' Psalms and Hymns and shortened others.

Altogether it was an admirable hymn book, but no sooner had it left the printer's hands than it aroused a tempest of protest. Such a mutilation of the revered Watts could never be tolerated. With a book intended chiefly for revivals it mattered less, but the older and more conservative parishes, in particular, insisted that for the stated Sabbath worship they must have *Watts entire;* other hymns might be added, but Watts must not be disturbed.

Reluctantly Dr. Worcester yielded, and in 1819 brought out another book. All of Watts' Psalms and Hymns were restored in full, even the hymn that Worcester's good taste had excluded,

> "My thoughts on awful subjects roll—
> Damnation and the dead";

and there were added two hundred and thirty-six hymns "selected from various authors"—hence the name, "Watts and Select," by which the book was familiarly known for years. But the *Harmony,* with its fine collection of eighty-two tunes, had to be dropped.

There was, however, one unique feature which remained. In the preface to his book Dr. Worcester said: "The grand defect of our public

psalmody, in general, is the want of proper *expression*. . . . The best psalm may be sung to the best tune, and every note, in the several parts, be sounded with the utmost exactness, and yet the performance have little interest or effect." He therefore devised what he called a "Key of Expression," to help in bringing out the "Pathetic," the "Grand," the "Beautiful," and the "Spirited." Letters prefixed to the lines of a hymn indicated how the words were to be sung. A stanza from a familiar hymn, with the meaning of the letters bracketed, will illustrate the device.

a (very slow) "Breathe, O breathe thy loving Spirit
Into every troubled breast!
e (slow) Let us all in thee inherit,
Let us find that second rest:
- (common) Take away our bent to sinning;
Alpha and Omega be;
o (loud) End of faith, as its beginning,
Set our hearts at liberty."

Evidently "Watts and Select" assumed that singers would be on the alert. During the many years that it was used it must have been a valuable text-book in hymn-expression.

In 1824, just twenty-five years after *The Hartford Selection* was published, there appeared a collection bearing the modest title, *Village Hymns*. It had been gathered by the Rev. Asahel Nettleton, a Congregational minister of

Connecticut, and was destined to become extremely popular. Nettleton took his college course at Yale. While there he met Samuel J. Mills, Jr., who had been a student at Williams and a member of the famous "Hay-stack" group. The two young men were brought into close fellowship, because both were fully determined to enter the foreign mission field. As it happened, neither was able to do so, but the early resolve had a permanent influence on Nettleton's life. He entered the ministry, but instead of accepting a settled pastorate, he became an evangelist. While in college there had been a revival in which he had taken an active part, and after graduating he threw himself into his work with great zeal. He was still planning to go abroad, hoping that God would open the door. In the meantime he went from place to place holding revivals. Increasingly be experienced the need of a hymn book better suited to the times, and better adapted than anything then in use, to his own work and to various religious gatherings in home and church.

During the interval since the appearance of the collections by Strong and Dwight, distinct progress had been made not only in hymn-singing, but in the writing and the compiling of hymns. While Nettleton shared the high regard everywhere felt for Dr. Watts, he realized as had

Dr. Strong, that Watts' hymns were not always the best in evangelistic meetings; and the time had now come when it could no longer be counted an unpardonable offense to make a collection drawn largely from other sources. Nevertheless it is significant that he took the precaution to distinctly state on the title page that the *Village Hymns* were merely "Designed as a Supplement to the Psalms and Hymns of Dr. Watts."

His task proved more difficult than he had anticipated. "I had hoped to find, in the style of genuine poetry, a greater number of hymns adapted to the various exigencies of a revival. Laborious research has, however, led me to conclude that not many such compositions are in existence." As for "hymns of a lower grade," he would not admit them. When he was through he had brought together a collection of six hundred hymns. He himself was no hymn-writer, and happily he knew it. But he was quick to discover the merits of a hymn, and his collection was so fresh and attractive that it sprang into immediate favor, and held its place for an entire generation.

The book is interesting both for what it contains and for what it does not contain. There are only fifty hymns by Isaac Watts. A number of Charles Wesley's are included, but only seven are credited to him. The compiling of hymn

books was something so comparatively new that the importance of linking a hymn with the name of the actual author was not fully appreciated. Indeed there was most astonishing ignorance as to the parentage of hymns. Following in the footsteps of others, Nettleton made numerous mistaken ascriptions; as with the hymns of Wesley, in crediting "Jesus, Lover of my Soul," to Cowper; "Love divine, all loves excelling," to Whitefield; and in leaving "O for a thousand tongues to sing," and, "Hark! the herald angels sing," anonymous. In the *Village Hymns* not only is there an unusual variety from English sources, but a large representation of American writers, such as Samuel Davies, Samson Occom, Henry Alline, Nathan Strong, President Dwight, and the youthful William B. Tappan, with his, " 'Tis midnight; and on Olives' brow" —then printed in a hymn book for the first time. Nettleton was always on the lookout for new writers. It was he who discovered Mrs. Phœbe Brown and gave to the world, "I love to steal awhile away." His lifelong desire to go as a foreign missionary, though thwarted, found a partial satisfaction in the opportunity to give to his hymn book a distinctly missionary tone. As mentioned elsewhere, in the *Village Hymns* were fifty-one on missions, a proportion hitherto not approached in any collection. Among them was

Heber's "From Greenland's icy mountains," written only five years before, and now for the first time appearing in an American hymn book.

In 1831 there was published the first part, and six months later, the second part, of *The Christian Lyre,* a collection by the Rev. Joshua Leavitt, a Congregational minister. He is chiefly remembered as a militant reformer, the fearless and bitter foe of intemperance and slavery, and sundry lesser evils. His fighting spirit involved him in many troubles but his zeal was never quenched. He was an ardent believer in revivals and especially in the work of Charles G. Finney, and in 1830, when Finney began a campaign in New York, where Leavitt was living, the latter became his close ally. It was in connection with Finney's meetings that Leavitt brought out his *Christian Lyre.* It was enthusiastically received, and within a few years passed through twenty-six editions.

It was not so much the hymns—which resembled Nettleton's collection—that appealed to the people, as it was the music. Leavitt frankly admitted that he possessed "no musical skill beyond that of ordinary plain singers," and that his book "was not designed to please scientific musicians"; but he knew what would take with the crowd. And so, breaking away from the usual restraints, he introduced secular tunes of a

popular type. To be sure, the appropriateness was not always apparent, as when a solemn hymn on "The Restoration" was put down to be sung to the Marseillaise, but this did not disturb the compiler so long as the people were pleased. A decided innovation, which added to the popularity of the *Lyre,* was the printing of the hymn and the tune on opposite pages. This did away in large measure with the cumbersome tune books, and simplified and improved congregational singing.

But if *The Christian Lyre* made friends, it also awakened strenuous opposition. Lowell Mason and Thomas Hastings, the leaders in the development of early church music in America, had for some years been striving to lift the musical standard in public worship. By voice and pen, through singing schools and the training of choirs, they had toiled incessantly to introduce into the divine service the dignity, reverence, and culture which they felt were in every way fitting. It was therefore a grief of soul to them when Leavitt's book appeared, and received such a hearty welcome. Something must be done at once to counteract its baneful influence. Mason had already published a *Church Psalmody,* a collection of Psalms and Hymns for formal public worship. Now the two men, in 1832, brought out *Spiritual Songs for Social Worship.*

In the preface the authors deplored the preva-

lent use of [2]"current love songs, the vulgar melodies of the street, of the midnight revellers, of the circus and the ballroom—in special seasons of revival." The new book showed a decided improvement in this respect. Its melodies, while simple, were dignified and worshipful. Among its hymns were several which now appeared for the first time and which were destined to become famous, including Ray Palmer's "My faith looks up to thee," Samuel F. Smith's "The morning light is breaking," and Thomas Hastings' "Hail to the brightness of Zion's glad morning." The book met with a cordial reception in many places and contributed still further to the improvement of church music.

Already, at the time *The Hartford Selection* came out, an occasional book had appeared, precursor of many to follow, which became very popular, but which, side by side with hymns of the first rank, contained some of a most curious literary quality. In 1784, Joshua Smith, a Baptist layman, and others, published the *Divine Hymns, or Spiritual Songs,* a collection that passed through a number of editions, and came to be highly regarded. In 1803 it was introduced into the First Baptist Church of Portland. So far as we have discovered, it was the first American hymn book, other than a Methodist, to contain

[2] Quoted in Benson's *The English Hymn*, p. 379.

"Jesus, Lover of my Soul." But some of the selections were not of this grade. Those were the days when it was common to describe the Christian in military phrase. Thus we read:

"Christ's soldiers do eat Christlike bread,
Wear regimental dress;
'Tis heav'nly white, and fac'd with red,
'Tis Christ's own righteousness.

"How brisk and bold Christ's soldiers are,
When dress'd up in this robe;
They look like men equipt for war,
Or like the sons of God.

"When dress'd up in this uniform,
In order march along;
Christ Jesus is their leader now,
And conscience beats the drum."

It was quite the thing to argue a doctrinal point in a hymn. Noah's ark is searched from top to bottom—only adults there; hence it must be clear to the dullest mind that infants are under the divine displeasure:

"Thus we have marched the ark around,
And find no infants there;
If there are any to be found,
We wish to ask you where."

In this collection there appeared for the first time in America the quaint hymn entitled "Christ the Appletree," after the allusion in the Song of Solomon: "As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons."

No one knows who wrote it. It has been traced back to a London magazine of 1761, whence it found its way across the sea. We have no knowledge of its ever having been sung in England, but on this side it became so thoroughly naturalized that we think of it as a part of our western hymnody. Perhaps its unusual imagery had something to do with commending it to our forbears. In part it runs as follows:

"The tree of life my soul hath seen,
Laden with fruit, and always green:
The trees of nature fruitless be
Compar'd with Christ the Appletree.

"For happiness I long have sought
And pleasure dearly have I bought;
I miss'd of all; but now I see
'Tis found in Christ the Appletree.

"I'll sit and eat this fruit divine,
It cheers my heart like spirit'al wine;
And now this fruit is sweet to me,
That grows on Christ the Appletree."

Camp Meetings were coming into vogue and suitable hymns were beginning to multiply. "A Collection of the Most Admired Hymns" for such gatherings contained "Miss Hataway's Experiences," in which the young lady confessed

"That darling sin I did commit,
Was that, which some delight in yet,
That heinous sin call'd civil mirth,
God threatens with his dreadful curse.

"I often-times to Church did go,
My beauty and fine clothes to show;" etc.

She afterward repented and was converted.

"My uncle said, don't be so dull,
Come, go with me to yonder ball;
I'll dress you up in silks so fine,
I'll make you heir of all that's mine."

But, in spite of the alluring appeal she remained steadfast. This production was regarded so highly that the Rev. Mr. Parkinson gave it a leading place in his new hymn book of 1809, a collection that professed to be superior to many that had gone before.

As the years went by and camp meetings became more numerous, new song collections sprang up on every side. They were all of the same general type. The emotions were constantly appealed to. One moment it was the mount of ecstatic vision, the next the valley of weeping. No book was thought to be complete where the dismal did not counterbalance the joyous. Even the disciples of the Lord must pass down into the gloom. The following lines were addressed to the saints:

"Hail, ye sighing sons of sorrow,
Learn with me your certain doom:
Learn with me your fate tomorrow,
Dead, perhaps laid in the tomb.

"Hollow winds about me roaring,
Noisy waters round me rise,
While I sit my fate deploring,
Tears fast streaming down my eyes."

In the next breath there are "Hallelujahs" and shouts of glory. It was essential to an acceptable camp meeting song that it mightily stir the feelings.

No doubt the Methodists would have been more largely given to the use of such songs had it not been that the only hymn book authorized by the General Conference was made up chiefly of the hymns of Charles Wesley, with some additions from other English sources. But almost from the beginning, the Methodists in America were inclined to slip away from their high standard, and it gave the church leaders serious concern. In the Minutes of the Christmas Conference, held at Baltimore in 1784, when the Methodist Episcopal Church was organized, we read: "Question 14. *How shall we reform our singing?* Answer. Let all our preachers who have any knowledge in the notes, improve it by learning to sing true themselves, and keeping close to Mr. Wesley's tunes and hymns."

So far as the official hymn book was concerned, there was no danger that the slightest recognition would ever be given to any of the ephemeral songs which presently began to flood the country.

Indeed, the policy of restriction was carried to such an extreme that up to 1849 the hymn book of the Methodist Episcopal Church did not contain a single hymn by an American writer. And in the great official collection of 1,148 hymns, in use from 1849 till 1878, there were less than thirty ascribed to American authors.

But it was inevitable during the camp meeting era that the Methodists, who largely dominated the movement, should fall into the habit of using songs of a lighter strain. Even so, however, their singing continued to be an element of great power. In 1830, while Joshua Leavitt was preparing his *Christian Lyre,* a brother Congregational minister confided to him: "We sacrifice too much to taste. The secret of the Methodists lies in the admirable adaptation of their music and hymns to produce effect; they strike at once at the heart, and the moment we hear their animated, thrilling choruses, we are electrified. We, on the other hand, are slow, cold, and formal, and ring our monotonous changes in common and long meter; and a whole congregation would be brought to a dead stand, if 'The voice of free grace,' should be given out from one of our pulpits."

Reference has elsewhere been made to the hymns of some of the earlier representatives of the so-called "liberal faith." We must bear in

mind that the "liberal" sentiments of those days were comparatively mild and expressed themselves chiefly in protest against the stern bigotry of the older theology:

> "Who among men, high Lord of all,
> Thy servant to his bar may call?
> Decide of heresy, and shake
> A brother o'er the flaming lake?"

"Liberal" hymn books contained hymns on the "Atoning Sacrifice of Christ," and on "Jesus worshiped by all the Creation," and the main departure from the orthodox standards was in the relative absence of the note of alarm and denunciation. In 1808, when the Rev. William Emerson, father of Ralph Waldo Emerson, and pastor of the First Church (Unitarian) of Boston, published a hymn book, he said in his preface: "It certainly is wrong, to breathe hatred or contempt against infidels" in hymns, and such hymns were excluded from his collection.

The *Collection of Psalms and Hymns for Christian Worship,* issued in 1830, became extremely popular, passing through no less than fifty editions. It was compiled by the Rev. F. W. P. Greenwood, pastor of the old King's Chapel, the stronghold of Boston Unitarianism, and it gave evidence of that literary discrimination which the Unitarians, less trammeled than their orthodox brethren by doctrinal require-

ments, had already shown. Hymns by Unitarian writers, so abundant at a later time, were as yet few in number, and Greenwood went far and wide for his material. "Hymns from Wesley's collection," said he, "and some Moravian hymns, I regard as among the richest contents of this volume. Their delightful fervor, though by some it may be called methodistical, will be thought by others, I trust, to be the true spirit of devotional Christian poetry." In this collection of five hundred and sixty hymns, besides the many from Charles Wesley, Montgomery, Cowper, Doddridge, and others, one hundred and fifteen are by Watts, showing how dependent Unitarian compilers were at this period on evangelical sources.

But it was well that disciples of the "liberal faith" were beginning to write their own hymns. Unitarian belief was rapidly becoming more radical; and in order to adapt evangelical hymns to use in liberal churches, compilers rearranged and rewrote the old hymns with a freedom which no reasonable rule on "hymn-tinkering" could indorse.

CHAPTER VIII

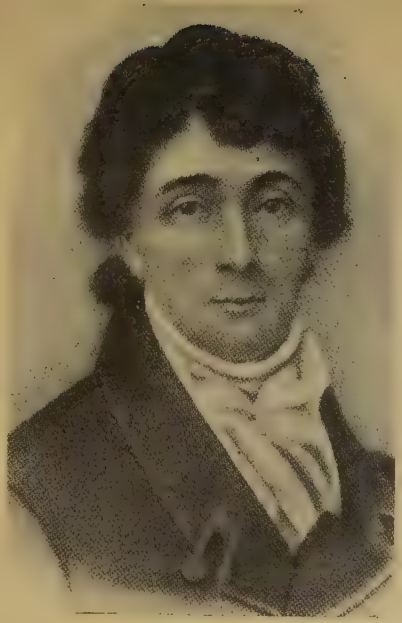
LELAND, HOLDEN, KEY, PIERPONT

John Leland
1754–1841

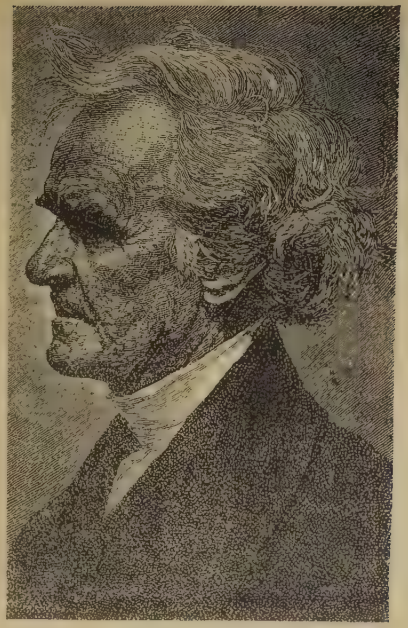
Elder John Leland, as he was generally known, has been called "the Lorenzo Dow of the Baptist denomination." He was a man of "endless eccentricities," but also of genuine worth. He was born at Grafton, Massachusetts, in 1754, and died in 1841. As a young man he felt a call to preach, and receiving a license he began work in Virginia. He remained there for fifteen years, most of the time a roving evangelist, winning many hundreds of converts. Returning to his native State in 1790, he made Cheshire his home, but continued his evangelistic activities. He was not only a mighty preacher, tall, of commanding presence, and with an expression of the eye that was "electrical," but he was also noted for his "mad devotion to politics." He was in the midst of every fray, and he seems to have had a powerful influence, especially while he lived in Virginia.

It is interesting to know that Elder Leland wrote hymns, and still more interesting to find what verses from his pen were actually sung. In the hymn book published in 1809, by Rev. Wil-

OLIVER HOLDEN



FRANCIS SCOTT KEY



JOHN PIERPONT

liam Parkinson, of New York, we have these lines by Leland:

"Brethren, I am come again;
Let us join to pray and sing;
. . . . . .
If you want to know of me,
How I am, or what I be;
Here I am, behold who will,
Sure I am a sinner still."

Another piece from the same pen, written in 1788, and which was a great favorite with the fathers, was sung at winter immersions to encourage timid converts to take the icy plunge:

"Christians, if your hearts are warm,
Ice and snow can do no harm;
If by Jesus you are prized
Rise, believe and be baptized."

Such odd crudities might be ignored save as they throw light on certain standards of taste of an early day.

But Elder Leland could do better than this. He wrote several passable hymns, and he gave to the church an evening hymn of real merit. It has won high praise from discriminating critics. Dr. Duffield, in his *English Hymns,* calls it a "classic in its unpretending beauty."

"The day is past and gone,
The evening shades appear;
Oh, may we all remember well
The night of death draws near.

"We lay our garments by,
Upon our beds to rest;
So death will soon disrobe us all
Of what we have possessed.

"Lord, keep us safe this night,
Secure from all our fears;
May angels guard us while we sleep,
Till morning light appears.

"And when we early rise,
And view the unwearied sun,
May we set out to win the prize,
And after glory run.

"And when our days are past,
And we from time remove,
Oh, may we in thy bosom rest,
The bosom of thy love."

Dr. Charles S. Robinson, in his *Annotations upon Popular Hymns,* says of this hymn: "Many of us in New England sang it for years at the family altar when Sabbath evening came around, and it speaks memories of other days when we teach our children to sing it now. May it live forever and ever!"

Oliver Holden[1]

1765–1844

We naturally think of Oliver Holden as the composer of "Coronation" rather than as a hymn-

[1] Dr. Duffield, in his *English Hymns*, speaks of Holden as "an almost mythical figure." A. E. Brown has succeeded in gathering some biographical data (New England Magazine, August, 1897) to which the following sketch is in part indebted.

author, though he wrote one of our best-loved hymns. He had some blue blood in his veins, for on his mother's side he was a direct descendant from the Earl of Carberry. Born in Shirley, Massachusetts, in 1765, some years later he moved to Charlestown, where he spent the rest of his life.

The love of music was a part of his very nature. His reputation as a composer and also as a leader of choirs grew so rapidly that when George Washington, as President of the United States, visited Boston in 1789, the city authorities selected young Holden to form and train the male chorus that was to greet the distinguished guest. As the hero approached the triumphal arch in front of the old State House, the words of the welcoming ode rang out:

"Now in full chorus burst the song
And shout the deeds of Washington."

It is interesting to know that at the World's Columbian Exposition at Chicago, in 1893, this ode was once again sung by the Musical Society of Stoughton, Massachusetts, the oldest musical organization in the country.

The success of his occasional tunes led Holden in 1792 to publish *America's Harmony,* quite a pretentious collection of airs suitable for various religious occasions. This was followed from time to time by other books of a similar character, and

after William Billings' death, he became the most popular composer of hymn and psalm tunes in America. It was in 1793, at the age of twenty-eight, that he wrote "Coronation." Edward Perronet's great hymn, "All hail the power of Jesus' name," had appeared in England in 1780, to be sung to "Miles Lane." It soon found its way to this side, but it was Holden's tune that gave it popularity in the American churches. "Coronation" was written just after the advent of the composer's firstborn child, a little daughter, and doubtless reflects the joy of the father's heart. The small organ on which the notes were woven together is still carefully preserved.

Oliver Holden was a deeply religious man. For some time he was a member of the First Baptist Church of Charlestown, but coming to feel that the discipline among the members was too lax, he withdrew and several others with him, and they organized the Second Baptist Church. They worshiped in very humble quarters and met with many discouragements, but their zeal never abated. It was at this time that Holden wrote his best-known hymn. The original comprised six stanzas, in Long Meter, but later the meter was changed and the hymn was reduced to the form in which it has ever since been used. It is widely sung in America and to some extent in England:

"They who seek the throne of grace,
Find that throne in every place;
If we live a life of prayer,
God is present everywhere.

"In our sickness or our health
In our want or in our wealth,
If we look to God in prayer,
God is present everywhere.

"When our earthly comforts fail,
When the foes of life prevail,
'Tis the time for earnest prayer;
God is present everywhere.

"Then, my soul, in every strait
To thy Father come and wait;
He will answer every prayer;
God is present everywhere."

Oliver Holden lived to the age of seventy-nine. One day, not long before the end, he sat down at the old organ on which he had composed "Coronation," and with tremulous voice sang these lines, the last he ever wrote:

"God of my life, nigh draws the day
When thou wilt summon me away
To dwell with those who live on high,
To sin no more, no more to die.

"My youthful days and riper years,
My joyful hours and hours of tears,
Passing away like fleeting wind,
Leave but a remnant here behind."

The closing hours are described by his granddaughter: "One September night, when he was

very ill, I pleaded with my mother that I might watch with her by his bedside. At three o'clock in the morning he made an effort to speak, but the words were unintelligible. As he turned his dear face a little toward mine, I asked, 'What did you say, Grandpa?' With an effort he repeated, 'I have some beautiful airs running in my head, if I only had strength to note them down.' " He lapsed into unconsciousness, and presently awoke where the strains of celestial music fell upon his ears.

Francis Scott Key

1779–1843

"O say! can you see, by the dawn's early light,
What so proudly we hailed, at the twilight's last gleaming?
Whose broad stripes and bright stars through the perilous fight,
O'er the ramparts we watched, were so gallantly streaming?"

The "Star Spangled Banner" means more to us to-day than ever before. We often used to sing it in indifferent and careless mood; we smiled at the Yankee "O say!" with which it began; we were quite ready to join the critics who found fault with the long lines and the uncouth rhythm. But our feelings have changed. We have been through the first foreign war of magnitude since the song was written, a century ago. Millions of our noblest young men flocked to the

colors; multitudes braved imminent peril; many made the supreme sacrifice. This song was sung not only by the boys at the front, and in patriotic rallies at home, but Sunday after Sunday in tens of thousands of places of worship, from the stately cathedral to the little countryside chapel. Our love for native land, our longing for world-peace and world-freedom, our unwavering trust in God, the tender memory of our fallen heroes—all are embalmed in these familiar words. The old song has entered into our deepest thought and feeling; it has become a veritable part of our religion; it has acquired a sacred meaning. It therefore merits a place in our Story of the American Hymn.

The author, Francis Scott Key, was born in Frederick County, Maryland, in 1780. His father fought with distinction as an officer in the Continental army. The son was educated at Saint John's College, Annapolis, afterward entering the profession of law. For a number of years before his death, in 1843, he was United States District Attorney in Washington.

In August, 1814, when the British troops returned to their ships after raiding the capital city, they took with them Dr. Beanes, a prominent physician of Upper Marlborough, who had been arrested on false charges. Alarmed for his safety, the doctor's friends appealed to Mr. Key

to try to secure his release. With the official sanction of President Madison, and accompanied by Colonel Skinner, Mr. Key set out in the United States cartel ship "Minden." He overtook the British fleet and secured the promise of Admiral Cochrane that the prisoner should be freed. But the entire American party was detained pending an attack on Baltimore which was about to be made.

On the day when the bombardment of Fort McHenry, defending the water approach to the city, began, the "Minden," with Mr. Key and his friends aboard, occupied a position from which the flag at the fort was distinctly seen. Night fell and the darkness was made visible by the glare of shot and shell. At length, utterly fatigued, his comrades retired below, but Mr. Key remained on watch. So long as the bombardment continued, he knew that the fort had not fallen, but when, toward morning, the firing ceased, he was filled with foreboding. He paced the deck of the little vessel in an agony of suspense. He afterward said that it was the most trying hour of his life. Watch in hand, he listened to the ticking of the seconds. At last, "by the dawn's early light," his straining gaze showed him that the "flag was still there." With bounding heart he took the first piece of paper he could find, an old letter in his pocket, and on the back

of it he wrote his immortal lyric. The paper was so scanty that only brief notes were made of some of the lines.

Shortly after sunrise the British admiral released the American ship. As soon as he reached Baltimore, Mr. Key wrote out the song in full, and the next morning he showed it to Judge Nicholson, his brother-in-law. The judge, who had commanded a volunteer company of artillery in the fight, was so delighted with it that it was at once given to the printer, who struck off copies in handbill form, for distribution on the street. Ferdinand Durang, a musician, picked up a copy and instantly caught the spirit of the lines. Adapting the words to the tune of "Anacreon in Heaven," he mounted a chair in an old tavern and sang them for the first time, the bystanders joining in the chorus. The whole city took up the song, and then it passed out to the nation. Never was the sentiment more appreciated than at the present time:

"O thus be it ever, when freemen shall stand
Between their loved homes and the war's desolation;
Blest with victory and peace, may the heav'n rescued land
Praise the Power that hath made and preserved us a nation!
Then conquer we must, when our cause it is just,
And this be our motto, 'In God is our trust';

And the Star Spangled Banner in triumph shall wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave."

Had we nothing more than these lines to inform us, it would be clear that the writer was a humble believer in Almighty God. But we know further that he was a devout Christian, a member of the Protestant Episcopal Church, and a zealous supporter of the evangelical wing of that church. He held a lay reader's license, and for years read the service and visited the sick; while in the Sunday school he taught a Bible class for young men. He was no less earnest in his own home. He conducted family prayers twice every day, and all the members of the household, including the servants, were required to be present. The last line of one of his own hymns was his motto both in public and in private, "Let my life show forth thy praise." He lived in a slaveholding community, and Roger B. Taney, afterward Chief Justice of the Supreme Court and author of the unfortunate "Dred Scott Decision," was his brother-in-law. Yet Mr. Key deplored slavery, and long before the subject was seriously agitated he freed his own slaves, and to the end of his life he made every effort to improve the condition of the Negroes.

Mr. Key was a poet of considerable merit. The hymn just alluded to is his best, and has been sung for years. As it appeared in Dr. Muhlenberg's *Church Poetry* in 1823, there were only three stanzas, and ever since it has been used in this form. But in 1900 Dr. Louis F. Benson secured at an auction sale a copy of the hymn in Mr. Key's autograph, and here four stanzas are given. The one so long missing is number three as it appears in the following complete version:

"Lord, with glowing heart I'd praise thee
For the bliss thy love bestows,
For the pardoning grace that saves me,
And the peace that from it flows:
Help, O God, my weak endeavor;
This dull soul to rapture raise:
Thou must light the flame, or never
Can my love be warmed to praise.

"Praise, my soul, the God that sought thee,
Wretched wanderer, far astray;
Found thee lost, and kindly brought thee
From the paths of death away:
Praise, with love's devoutest feeling,
Him who saw thy guilt-born fear,
And, the light of hope revealing,
Bade the blood-stained cross appear.

"Praise thy Saviour God that drew thee
To that cross, new life to give,
Held a blood-sealed pardon to thee,
Bade thee look to him and live.

Praise the grace whose threats alarmed thee,
Roused thee from thy fatal ease,
Praise the grace whose promise warmed thee,
Praise the grace that whispered peace.

"Lord, this bosom's ardent feeling
Vainly would my lips express:
Low before thy footstool kneeling,
Deign thy suppliant's prayer to bless:
Let thy grace, my soul's chief treasure,
Love's pure flame within me raise;
And, since words can never measure,
Let my life show forth thy praise."

While on a visit to Baltimore, not far from the spot where "The Star Spangled Banner" was first sung, Francis Scott Key died, on January 11, 1843. A beautiful bronze figure on a granite base marks his resting place in Frederick, Maryland, and a monument in his honor, provided for in a bequest by James Lick, the founder of the Lick Observatory, adorns the Golden Gate Park, San Francisco.

John Pierpont

1785–1866

In 1824 the Rev. John Pierpont of Boston, already widely known as a writer of poetry, was asked to contribute a hymn to be sung at the opening of a new church in Salem, Massachusetts. He responded by sending a lyric of which Mr. W. Garrett Horder, the English hymn-critic, has said, "It is the earliest really great

hymn I have found in an American writer." The stanzas now in use are as follows:

"O Thou, to whom, in ancient time,
The lyre of Hebrew bards was strung,
Whom kings adored in song sublime,
And prophets praised with glowing tongue;

"Not now on Zion's height alone
Thy favored worshiper may dwell,
Nor where, at sultry noon, thy Son
Sat weary by the patriarch's well.

"From every place below the skies,
The grateful song, the fervent prayer,
The incense of the heart, may rise
To heaven, and find acceptance there.

"O Thou, to whom, in ancient time,
The lyre of prophet bards was strung,
To Thee at last, in every clime,
Shall temples rise, and praise be sung."

John Pierpont was born in Litchfield, Connecticut, in 1785, and graduated from Yale in 1804. He became a lawyer and practiced for several years. Then he heard a call to the ministry, and in 1819 he entered on the pastorate of the Hollis Street Unitarian Church, Boston. There he remained for more than twenty years, and had he been a time-server he might have continued much longer. But he was a militant reformer; he abhorred intemperance and slavery. His parishioners tried to silence him and failed,

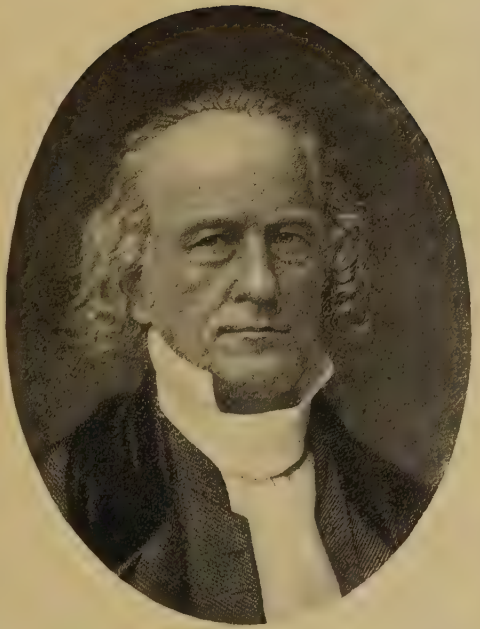
and when they sought to drive him out they failed again. But at last he voluntarily withdrew and became pastor of another church. The indomitable spirit of the man was shown at the outbreak of the Civil War when, past the age of seventy-six, he hurried to the front to serve as chaplain of a Massachusetts regiment.

During his long life he wrote much and well. He was often appealed to for hymns for special occasions, so much so that he once referred to the bulk of his poems as "the wares of a verse-wright, made to order." But many of them were full of spontaneity. The hymn on "The Greatness of the Father," is one of his best:

"God Almighty and All-seeing!
Holy One, in whom we all
Live, and move, and have our being,
Hear us when on thee we call;
Father, hear us
As before thy throne we fall.

"Of all good art thou the Giver;
Weak and wandering ones are we;
Then forever, yea, forever,
In thy presence would we be;
O, be near us,
That we wander not from thee."

WILLIAM BINGHAM TAPPAN



GEORGE WASHINGTON DOANE

EDMUND HAMILTON SEARS

CHAPTER IX

TAPPAN, G. W. DOANE, SEARS, WATERBURY

William Bingham Tappan

1794–1849

One day, in the year 1815, when the lumbering mail coach from New York rolled into Philadelphia, there alighted a young fellow by the name of Tappan. He was a stranger, twenty-one years old, looking for work in making and repairing clocks. No one to have seen him would have dreamed that he would make any sort of impress on the world; still less would they have thought so if they had known his meager preparation for an important work in life. And yet this young man sent out no less than ten volumes of poetry, and while most of it was commonplace, there were several sacred pieces which now, after a hundred years, are still widely sung in the churches, and are likely to be prized for a long time to come. And furthermore, as an evangelist and Sunday school worker, both east and west, he made a valuable contribution to the advancement of the Kingdom.

William B. Tappan was born in Beverley, Massachusetts, in 1794. Twelve years later his

father died, and as was usual with boys of limited means in those days, he at once started out to earn his own living. He was apprenticed to a clockmaker in Boston, with whom he spent the next nine years. As he grew up he fell in with evil companions, and only the appeals and prayers of a godly mother saved him from a thoroughly bad life. He was restless at his trade, and the moment he was twenty-one and the fetters of his apprenticeship were broken, he determined to get far away from his old surroundings, and therefore started out on what was then the very long journey to Philadelphia. He worked at the clock-bench for a while, but was not contented. Ever since his boyhood he had longed to be a student and a writer, but he had been hindered at every step. All told he had attended school only six months, and the most that he knew was what his father had taught him at home, and what he himself had picked up from industrious reading in spare moments.

As soon as possible he gave up his trade and turned to general study and literary pursuits. In 1819 he published his first book, *New England and Other Poems.* We are especially interested in this little volume, for it contains a piece entitled "Heaven, a Place of Rest." Years afterward, referring to this poem, the author said: "It was written by me in Philadelphia, in the

summer of 1818, for the *Franklin Gazette,* edited by Richard Bache, Esq., and was introduced by him to the public in terms sufficiently flattering to a young man who then certainly lacked confidence in himself. The piece was republished in England and on the Continent, in various newspapers and magazines, and was also extensively circulated in my own native land." Excepting the second stanza it is widely sung at the present time:

"There is an hour of peaceful rest,
To mourning wanderers given;
There is a joy for souls distressed,
A balm for every wounded breast,
'Tis found above—in heaven.

"There is a soft, a downy bed,
Far from these shades of even—
A couch for weary mortals spread,
Where they may rest the aching head
And find repose—in heaven.

"There is a home for weary souls
By sin and sorrow driven,
When tossed on life's tempestuous shoals,
Where storms arise and ocean rolls,
And all is drear—'tis heaven.

"There faith lifts up the tearless eye
To brighter prospects given;
And views the tempest passing by,
The evening shadows quickly fly,
And all serene—in heaven.

"There fragrant flowers immortal bloom,
And joys supreme are given;
There rays divine disperse the gloom:
Beyond the confines of the tomb
Appears the dawn—of heaven."

Encouraged by his first literary venture, in 1822 Mr. Tappan sent out a second volume of poems. Here we find those lines of subdued, tender solemnity:

"'Tis midnight; and on Olives' brow
The star is dimmed that lately shone:
'Tis midnight; in the garden now,
The suffering Saviour prays alone."

This hymn, entitled "Gethsemane," has long been accepted as a worthy member of the select family of Passion hymns. As sung to the plaintive melody by William B. Bradbury, with which it is familiarly associated, it has had an extensive use.

When Nettleton's *Village Hymns* appeared in 1824, they included one on "Love," by Tappan. Now almost forgotten, it was once quite popular, and Professor F. M. Bird was inclined to give it first place among Tappan's hymns. Whatever its relative merit, it deserves to be brought out of its obscurity and quoted in this connection:

"The ransomed spirit to her home,
The clime of cloudless beauty, flies;
No more on stormy seas to roam,
She hails her heaven in the skies:

But cheerless are those heavenly fields,
The cloudless clime no pleasure yields,
There is no bliss in bowers above,
If thou art absent, HOLY LOVE!

"The Cherub near the viewless throne
Hath smote the harp with trembling hand;
And One with incense-fire hath flown,
To touch with flame the angel-band:
But tuneless is the quivering string,
No melody can Gabriel bring,
Mute are its arches when above,
The harps of heaven wake not to LOVE!

"Earth, sea, and sky one language speak,
In harmony that soothes the soul;
'Tis heard when scarce the zephyrs wake,
And when on thunders, thunders roll:
That voice is heard and tumults cease,
It whispers to the bosom peace;
O, speak, Inspirer! from above,
And cheer *our* hearts, CELESTIAL LOVE!

Tappan's best hymns were all written in his early manhood. In 1826 he accepted a position with the newly organized American Sunday School Union, which he retained to the close of his life. To increase his opportunity for doing good, in 1841 he was licensed as a Congregational minister. Both east and west he rendered valuable service for the Master. Death came suddenly, from cholera, in 1849.

George Washington Doane

1799–1859

For many years George Washington Doane was a notable figure in the religious life of America. Born in 1799, graduating with the highest honors from Union College at the age of nineteen, ordained to the Episcopal priesthood, a teacher at Trinity College, Hartford, then rector of Trinity Church, Boston, when thirty-three years old he was made bishop of New Jersey. Here he remained till his death in 1859, witnessing during those twenty-seven years an astonishing growth throughout his diocese. He was an indefatigable worker, shrinking from no toil or hardship, thinking nothing of keeping at a task for twenty hours out of the twenty-four. He was a High-Churchman, of the militant sort, and wherever he went he fearlessly propagated his beliefs. He loved controversy and he had it to his heart's content. "My father was a man of war from his youth," wrote the son.

But if he was an ecclesiastical warrior, he was something more; he was a Christian poet. Two generations have gone by since he died, and the oldtime controversies are quite forgotten; but the man himself is lovingly remembered, for not a week, scarcely a day, passes, that his hymns are not sung in home or sanctuary. His son, the Rt. Rev. William C. Doane, for many years

Bishop of Albany, has told us that his "father's poetical writings were simple necessities. He could not help them. His heart was so full of song. It oozed out in his conversation, in his sermons, in everything that he did. Sometimes in a steamboat, often when the back of a letter was his only paper, the sweetest things came."

While he wrote many lyrics he is chiefly remembered for three. In 1824, just as he was entering on his life work, he published a small volume, now very scarce, *Songs by the Way*. One of the songs was entitled "Evening," based on the words of the Psalmist, "Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense; and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice." It was at once recognized as a hymn of rare beauty, and two years later it was given a permanent standing by being received into the American Prayer Book Collection. Originally there were four stanzas, as follows:

"Softly now the light of day
Fades upon my sight away;
Free from care, from labor free,
Lord, I would commune with thee.

"Thou, whose all-pervading eye
Naught escapes, without, within,
Pardon each infirmity,
Open fault, and secret sin.

"Soon, for me, the light of day
Shall forever pass away;
Then, from sin and sorrow free,
Take me, Lord, to dwell with thee.

"Thou, who, sinless, yet hast known,
All of man's infirmity;
Then from thine eternal throne,
Jesus, look with pitying eye."

In most hymn books the piece appears in this form, but it is stronger with the last stanza omitted; the first three are complete in themselves. This hymn is sung the world over, wherever the English tongue is spoken. It is great in its simplicity. In 1837 Bishop Doane founded Saint Mary's Hall, a church school for girls, at Burlington, New Jersey. He is buried in the neighboring churchyard. We are told that "every Wednesday evening, in the chapel service, 'Softly now the light of day' is sung as a sort of requiem, or memorial, by young voices that are taught to reverence the founder whom they only know by tradition."

In *Songs by the Way* there was another poem which found a place in the Prayer Book Collection, and which is in extensive use both at home and abroad—the one beginning, "Thou art the Way: to Thee alone." It is based on the words of Jesus, in John 14. 6. Metrical expositions of Scriptures are apt to be stilted and spiritless,

but this one is a success. We cannot agree with those who declare that it is "the first of American hymns," for Bishop Doane himself rose higher on occasion; but it certainly merits the place which it has held in our hymnody for nearly a hundred years—really useful if not great.

"Thou art the Way:—to thee alone
From sin and death we flee;
And he who would the Father seek,
Must seek him, Lord, by thee.

"Thou art the Truth:—thy word alone
True wisdom can impart;
Thou only canst inform the mind,
And purify the heart.

"Thou art the Life:—the rending tomb
Proclaims thy conquering arm;
And those who put their trust in thee
Nor death nor hell shall harm.

"Thou art the Way, the Truth, the Life;
Grant us that way to know,
That truth to keep, that life to win,
Whose joys eternal flow."

In the Episcopal Church Bishop Doane was known as the missionary bishop of America. It was during his boyhood and student days that the wave of missionary enthusiasm swept over the country, when Missionary Boards and Societies were organized, and Monthly Missionary Concerts were held in the churches; when collections were taken and shiploads of workers sent to the

field. The Protestant Episcopal Board began its history in 1820. Fifteen years later, its constitution was completely changed, placing the Board on a broader foundation, with a vision and a program. In the work of reorganization, young Bishop Doane had a conspicuous part, and on through the years his inspiring leadership was constantly in evidence. One of his greatest sermons, still read with delight, was preached in 1837, on "The Missionary Charter of the Church."

We are not surprised that his noblest lyric is a trumpet call to the church, to "Fling out the banner!" of Jesus Christ to all the earth. The figure is taken from the words of the Psalmist: "Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth." Undoubtedly this hymn, with its swift succession of vivid pictures and its ringing challenge, is one of our greatest missionary lyrics. But even the best words, to be popular in song, need an appropriate melody. Professor Breed calls attention to the fact that it was the happy joining of this hymn to the spirited tune by J. B. Calkin that had much to do with bringing it into widespread use.

"Fling out the banner! let it float
Skyward and seaward, high and wide;
The sun that lights its shining folds,
The cross, on which the Saviour died.

"Fling out the banner! angels bend
In anxious silence o'er the sign,
And vainly seek to comprehend
The wonder of the love divine.

"Fling out the banner! heathen lands
Shall see from far the glorious sight,
And nations, crowding to be born,
Baptize their spirits in its light.

"Fling out the banner! sin-sick souls
That sink and perish in the strife
Shall touch in faith its radiant hem,
And spring immortal into life.

"Fling out the banner! let it float
Skyward and seaward, high and wide,
Our glory, only in the cross;
Our only hope, the Crucified!

"Fling out the banner! wide and high,
Seaward and skyward let it shine;
Nor skill, nor might, nor merit ours;
We conquer only in that sign."

Edmund Hamilton Sears
1810–1876

Edmund Hamilton Sears was born in Berkshire County, Massachusetts, in 1810. He graduated from Union College in the class of '34, and three years later completed his theological course at the Harvard Divinity School. Entering the Unitarian ministry, he served in the pastorate for nearly two score years. He also found time

to write. His books on *Regeneration, Foregleams of Immortality,* and the *Fourth Gospel the Heart of Christ,* and on other subjects, were widely read and highly appreciated outside as well as within his own denomination. He had a poetic vein which not only gave a peculiar charm to his prose style, but which expressed itself in many poems of unusual merit.

Though his treatises are to-day rarely read and his sermons are wellnigh forgotten, his poetical work has made his fame imperishable; especially his two Christmas hymns, the finest of American origin—poems that worthily take a place with the choicest nativity lyrics in English hymnody. More than once in these pages attention is called to the significant fact that very many of our leading hymns were written when the authors were quite young. Mr. Sears was barely out of college when he contributed to the *Boston Observer* his "Christmas Song." Its striking superiority to the great mass of sacred verse that was coming from American pens was quickly seen, and it was accorded a place of high honor which it has held ever since. We give it here as emended by the author:

"Calm on the listening ear of night
Come Heaven's melodious strains,
Where wild Judea stretches far
Her silver-mantled plains;

Celestial choirs from courts above
Shed sacred glories there;
And angels with their sparkling lyres
Make music on the air.

"The answering hills of Palestine
Send back the glad reply,
And greet from all their holy heights
The day-spring from on high.
O'er the blue depths of Galilee
There comes a holier calm;
And Sharon waves, in solemn praise,
Her silent groves of palm.

'Glory to God!' The lofty strain
The realm of ether fills;
How sweeps the song of solemn joy
O'er Judah's sacred hills!
'Glory to God!' The sounding skies
Loud with their anthems ring:
'Peace on the earth; good-will to men,
From Heaven's eternal King.'

"Light on thy hills, Jerusalem!
The Saviour now is born:
More bright on Bethelehem's joyous plains
Breaks the first Christmas morn;
And brighter on Moriah's brow,
Crowned with her temple-spires,
Which first proclaim the new-born light,
Clothed with its orient fires.

"This day shall Christian hearts be mute
And Christian hearts be cold?
Oh, catch the anthem that from heaven
O'er Judah's mountains rolled!

When nightly burst from seraph-harps
The high and solemn lay,
'Glory to God!' on earth be peace;
Salvation comes to-day!"

No wonder that Oliver Wendell Holmes, in a course of lectures before the Lowell Institute in Boston, pronounced this "one of the finest and most beautiful hymns ever written."

If Dr. Sears had done nothing more, this one song would have sufficed to give him an assured place among our American hymn writers. But in 1849 he enriched our hymnody with that other glorious lyric, "It came upon the midnight clear." Dr. Morison wrote of it: "Sears' second Christmas hymn was sent to me as editor of the *Christian Register,* I think, in December, 1849. I was very much delighted with it. . . . I always feel that, however poor my Christmas sermon may be, the reading and singing of this hymn are enough to make up for all deficiencies." It should be remembered that Dr. Sears was a Unitarian in name rather than in fact. Throughout his life he held to the absolute divinity of Christ. The lines that follow are full of Heaven's sweetest music; they seem to sing themselves. Listen to their note of good cheer! What a glorious vision, what triumphant faith! There never was a time to which they were better suited than the present.

"It came upon the midnight clear,
That glorious song of old,
From angels bending near the earth
To touch their harps of gold;
'Peace on the earth, good will to men,
From heaven's all-gracious King:'
The world in solemn stillness lay
To hear the angels sing.

"Still through the cloven skies they come
With peaceful wings unfurled,
And still their heavenly music floats
O'er all the weary world;
Above its sad and lowly plains
They bend on hovering wing,
And ever o'er its Babel sounds
The blessèd angels sing.

"Yet with the woes of sin and strife
The world hath suffered long;
Beneath the angel-strain have rolled
Two thousand years of wrong;
And man, at war with man, hears not
The love song which they bring:
O hush the noise, ye men of strife,
And hear the angels sing!

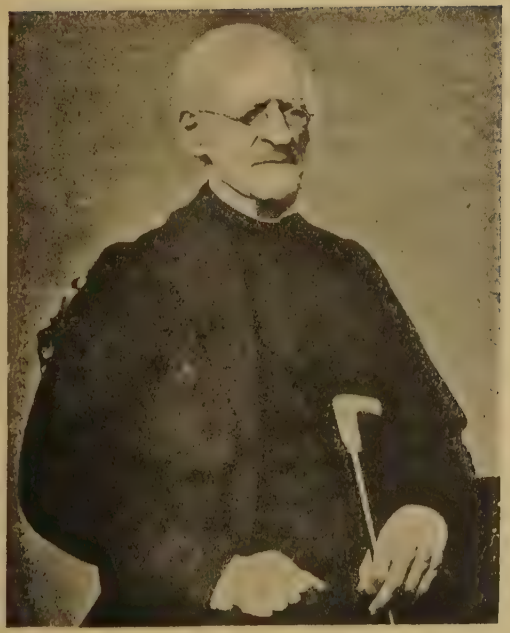
"And ye, beneath life's crushing load,
Whose forms are bending low,
Who toil along the climbing way
With painful steps and slow—
Look now! for glad and golden hours
Come swiftly on the wing:
O rest beside the weary road,
And hear the angels sing!

"For lo! the days are hastening on
By prophet-bards foretold,
When with the ever-circling years
Comes round the age of gold;
When peace shall over all the earth
Its ancient splendors fling,
And the whole world send back the song
Which now the angels sing."

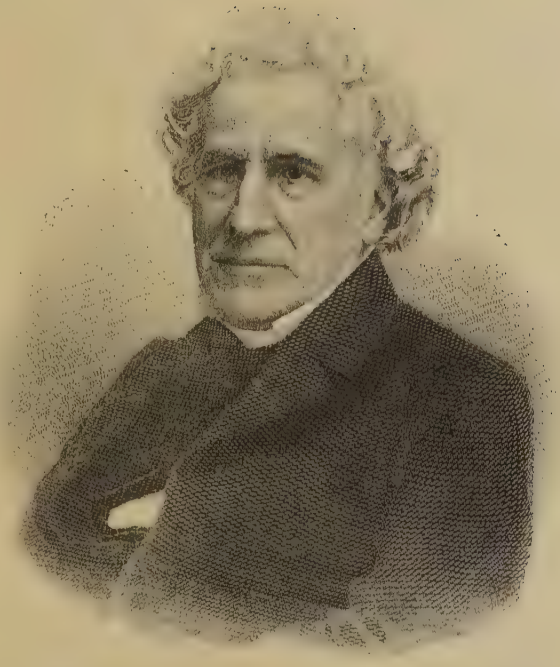
JARED BELL WATERBURY
1799–1876

"Soldiers of the cross, arise!
Lo! your Leader from the skies
Waves before you glory's prize,
The prize of victory.
Seize your armor, gird it on;
Now the battle will be won;
See, the strife will soon be done;
Then struggle manfully."

The militant hymn which opens with this stanza first appeared in the *Christian Lyre,* published by Joshua Leavitt in 1831. It was one of the choicest pieces in that collection and it has lived through all the years. Bishop Warren regarded it so highly that he included it among his "Fifty-Two Memory Hymns." It was written by Jared Bell Waterbury, who was born in New York City in 1799, and who became an eminently useful Congregational minister. He was the author of several hymns, most of them belonging to his early manhood, but he is chiefly remembered for his "Soldiers of the Cross."



THOMAS HASTINGS



WILLIAM AUGUSTUS MUHLENBERG

CHAPTER X

HASTINGS, MUHLENBERG

Thomas Hastings

1784–1872

Thomas Hastings, Doctor of Music, is gratefully remembered as the author of a multitude of hymns, more than six hundred in all, some of them of large merit; still more, as the composer of some of our very finest hymn-tunes; and most of all, for the steady, persistent, uncompromising and successful influence which he exerted in improving the standard of sacred music in America.

His career is an eloquent witness to what resolute endeavor can accomplish in the almost total absence of early opportunity. The son of a country physician, he was born in Litchfield County, Connecticut, in 1784. Twelve years later, in the depth of winter, the family migrated by sleigh and ox-sledge, to Clinton, New York. They were now on the frontier, with all the rigorous toil and hardship that such a life entailed. For eight months of the year school was unthought of; the farm demanded all the time and strength of every child old enough to work. When the

ice and snow came, the boy eagerly turned to his studies, gladly trudging six miles a day through cold and drifts for the sake of the coveted instruction. A passionate love for music was born in him, but what chance to cultivate it in that semiwilderness? His first text-book in music was a six-penny primer of four small pages; but he mastered it, and then persevered till he obtained something better. When he was admitted to the choir of the village church, and when at last the proud day came that he stepped forth as the chorister, he was elated beyond measure. Later on, he sought a position as teacher of a singing school, but more than a year passed before he found it, and it was not till 1816, at thirty-two years of age, that he ventured to finally cut loose from the farm and other means of support and devote himself exclusively to his loved profession. From that time till his death in 1872, his name was inseparably connected with the progress of sacred music in this country.

As a lecturer, as a writer of innumerable books and articles, and as the leader of many choirs, he constantly preached the doctrine that "religion has the same claim substantially in song as in speech." The homage that we owe Almighty God calls for the noblest and most reverential tribute that music can render. For several years he edited a religious journal, the *Western Re-*

corder, in Utica, using its columns to give wider currency to his views. He was often invited to address prominent gatherings, including the Presbyterian General Assembly, held at Philadelphia in 1829.

He had much to contend with, for popular taste was deficient. In 1831, when Joshua Leavitt sent out his *Christian Lyre,* with its many taking tunes of the "Gospel Hymn" variety, Thomas Hastings, in company with Lowell Mason, sought to counteract what they regarded as a harmful influence, by publishing *Spiritual Songs for Social Worship,* to which reference has already been made. The melodies were sweet and simple, but dignified and churchly, and the effect was wholesome. Hastings' reputation as a musical writer and director was so well established that in 1832 a group of New York churches united in sending him a call to make the metropolis his home. Boston had Mason, New York needed a leader of similar standing. He accepted the invitation, and for forty years he was an integral part of the great city's life. Among the hymn books that he edited during those years, *Church Melodies,* published in 1858, is especially remembered. It was the first hymnal in which was adopted the plan that soon became wellnigh universal, of having the words and the appropriate tune printed on the same

page. It was effective in aiding congregational singing.

As already stated, we are indebted to Dr. Hastings for some of our finest tunes, such as "Zion," to which "Guide me, O thou great Jehovah," and several other hymns of similar meter, are sung; and "Ortonville," that for so many years has been wedded in exquisite unison, to "Majestic sweetness sits enthroned"; and "Retreat," that is equally well adapted to "From every stormy wind that blows." But undoubtedly the best tune that he ever composed was "Toplady," to which "Rock of Ages" is sung. When they were brought together in 1830, it was a heaven-born union; it would be an unpardonable offense to attempt a separation.

Although he produced more than six hundred hymns, no one would call Thomas Hastings a great poet. He was first of all a musician; hymn-writing was secondary, and grew out of the other. And yet the musical and the poetical are always related, and with Hastings the kinship was peculiarly close. As he wrote his tunes, with scarcely an effort appropriate words seemed to flow from his pen, and almost before he was aware the hymn took its place beside the melody. It has been well said that he knew how to make a *"singable* hymn," and that is more than some far greater poets have been able to do. "Come, ye

disconsolate, where'er ye languish," is sometimes attributed to Hastings, but the first two stanzas are from a poem by Thomas Moore; only the third is by the American; but through the years it has held a place of credit with the lines of the Irish singer:

"Here see the bread of life; see waters flowing
Forth from the throne of God, pure from above;
Come to the feast of love; come, ever knowing
Earth has no sorrow but Heaven can remove."

In that first third of the nineteenth century, when the Christian world was being stirred with missionary zeal as it had not been since the days of the apostles, when Sir John Bowring was composing his "Watchman, tell us of the night," and James Montgomery was sending out "Hail to the Lord's Anointed," and Reginald Heber was thrilling the church with "From Greenland's icy mountains"; in the year 1832, in which Samuel F. Smith wrote "The morning light is breaking," Thomas Hastings produced a missionary lyric, by common consent the best of all his hymns:

"Hail to the brightness of Zion's glad morning!
Joy to the lands that in darkness have lain!
Hushed be the accents of sorrow and mourning;
Zion in triumph begins her mild reign.

"Hail to the brightness of Zion's glad morning,
Long by the prophets of Israel foretold!
Hail to the millions from bondage returning!
Gentiles and Jews the blest vision behold.

"Lo, in the desert rich flowers are springing,
Streams ever copious are gliding along;
Loud from the mountain-tops echoes are ringing,
Wastes rise in verdure, and mingle in song.

"See, from all lands, from the isles of the ocean,
Praise to Jehovah ascending on high;
Fallen are the engines of war and commotion,
Shouts of salvation are rending the sky."

To those not especially familiar with our hymnody, the statement of Professor F. M. Bird, writing in 1890, in regard to Dr. Hastings, will come as a surprise: "If we take the aggregate of American hymnals published during the last fifty years or for any portion of that time, more hymns by him are found in common use than by any other native writer." But it must be admitted that while his hymns average well, comparatively few of them are of exceptional merit. One of the best and most widely used bears the title, "Pilgrimage of Life." It was written in 1831, when his earliest poems were appearing:

"Gently, Lord, O gently lead us,
Pilgrims in this vale of tears,
Through the trials yet decreed us,
Till our last great change appears.

"When temptation's darts assail us,
When in devious paths we stray,
Let thy goodness never fail us,
Lead us in thy perfect way.

"In the hour of pain and anguish,
In the hour when death draws near,
Suffer not our hearts to languish,
Suffer not our souls to fear.

"And, when mortal life is ended,
Bid us in thine arms to rest,
Till, by angel-bands attended,
We awake among the blest."

It was after reading this hymn of childlike trust, beautiful in its simplicity, that the late Dr. Charles S. Robinson exclaimed, "His poems breathe the air of heaven!"

In 1834 Dr. Hastings brought together a group of poems in what he called *The Mother's Hymn Book.* They bore upon the dedication of children to God, and kindred topics. One of them, with the title, "Thy will be done," became a great favorite and has been sung at numberless funerals:

"Jesus, while our hearts are bleeding
O'er the spoils that death has won,
We would, at this solemn meeting,
Calmly say, 'Thy will be done.'

"Though cast down, we're not forsaken;
Though afflicted, not alone:
Thou didst give, and thou hast taken;
Blessed Lord, 'Thy will be done.'

"Though to-day we're filled with mourning,
Mercy still is on the throne;
With thy smiles of love returning,
We can sing, 'Thy will be done.'

"By thy hands the boon was given;
Thou hast taken but thine own:
Lord of earth, and God of heaven,
Evermore, 'Thy will be done.' "

William Augustus Muhlenberg
1796–1877

On a certain occasion, in later years, after a stranger on being introduced to him, had effusively exclaimed, "*Have I* the honor of speaking to the author of 'I would not live alway'?" Dr. Muhlenberg somewhat wearily remarked to a friend, "One would think *that hymn* the one work of my life." And it is safe to say that the great majority of people do associate him almost exclusively with that particular poem. But aside altogether from his hymns, Dr. Muhlenberg has an outstanding place in the church life of the past century.

He was exceptionally well-born, coming from a remarkable family. His great-grandsire, "the blessed and venerable Henry Melchior Muhlenberg," migrated to this country in 1742, and founded the American Lutheran Church. His grandfather was president of the convention which ratified the Constitution of the United States, and was the first Speaker of the new House of Representatives. One of his uncles was a clergyman, but his patriotism was so intense that when the Revolution broke out he laid

aside his clerical robes and entered the army, becoming a general.

William Augustus was born in Philadelphia in 1796. The German language was exclusively used in the Lutheran service in those days, and as the children did not understand it, William and his little sister were allowed to attend Christ Episcopal Church. The boy grew to be very fond of the service, especially the music, and thus it came about that he drifted from the ancestral church and entered the Episcopal fold.

When he was a mere child he had determined that some day he would become a minister. He was never diverted from this thought, and after his college course he studied theology and was ordained an Episcopal clergyman. He preached for five years in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, where he had an experience to which we shall presently refer. Then for a number of years he was at the head of a boys' school which he himself founded and which grew into Saint Paul's College, at Flushing, Long Island. In 1846, in his full prime, he moved to New York, which thereafter was his home. What a work he did in those following years! To few men has it been given to initiate so many enterprises which have lived and have proved to be a great blessing. As rector of the Church of the Holy Communion, established by his sister, he introduced the system of free

pews, a complete novelty in those days. He started the first boy choir in New York City. He organized the First Protestant Sisterhood. At a time when there was not a church hospital in the metropolis, and only two of any kind, one for seamen and the other for paupers, he founded Saint Luke's Hospital, and for the twenty remaining years of his life he lived within its walls, by day and night ministering to the spiritual needs of the inmates. He toiled incessantly to bring about a closer fellowship of all the churches. His activities were countless.

He was of striking appearance, tall, with a massive head and a noble face. In the *Recollections of a Long Life,* Dr. Cuyler, who knew him intimately, writes: "He was one of the most apostolic men I have ever known. . . . His gray head all men knew in New York. He commanded attention everywhere by his genial face and hearty manner of speech. . . . When very near the end, the chaplain of the hospital prayed at his bedside for his recovery. 'Let us have an understanding about this,' said Muhlenberg. 'You are asking God to restore me and I am asking God to take me home. There must not be any contradiction in our prayers, for it is evident that he cannot answer them both.' This was characteristic of his bluff frankness as well as of his heavenly-mindedness—he would not live alway!"

Dr. Muhlenberg was past eighty when he died, but it is interesting to note that nearly all of his hymns which are sung to-day were written when he was a young man. There is nothing exceptional in this. Many poets, hymn writers in particular, have done their best work before they were thirty. He was devotedly fond of good church music, and from the time he was a lad he noted the poverty of the Episcopal Church in the matter of hymns. Several of the other communions had Watts, and the Methodists were well supplied from the Wesleyan collection, but the Episcopalians were limited to a group of fifty-seven hymns, bound up with the Prayer Book, together with the Psalms in meter. Satisfactory congregational singing was impossible under such conditions.

The situation was so urgent that in 1821, soon after entering on his new church work in Lancaster, young Muhlenberg wrote a tract entitled, *A Plea for Christian Hymns,* which he addressed to a friend in the Special General Convention held in Philadelphia that year. But nothing came of it at the time; and so he boldly went ahead and prepared a book for his own congregation, which he called *Church Poetry.* Soon it was adopted by other clergymen in various parts of the country. When the General Convention was held in 1823, it was agreed that "it

was high time the church acted in the matter, for if not, the clergy would take it into their own hands." Mr. Muhlenberg was a member of the convention and was placed on the committee to prepare the new hymnal. It is interesting to note that one of the laymen on the committee was Francis Scott Key, author of "The Star Spangled Banner." Three years later the book was finished, and a remarkable feature of it was that the four best-known hymns Muhlenberg ever wrote were included.

Among the hymns that came before the committee was the one beginning, "I would not live alway." Dr. Onderdonk, who was a member of the committee, and who had already approved of the hymn, chanced to be absent at this session. No one present, excepting the author, had ever seen it before, and none suspected that it had come from the pen of the young man who sat there with closed lips. "One of the members," says Dr. Muhlenberg, "remarked that it was very sweet and pretty, but rather sentimental, upon which it was unanimously thrown out," the author voting against himself. "That I supposed was the end of it. The committee, which sat until late at night at the house of Bishop White, agreed upon their report to the convention, and adjourned. But the next morning, Dr. Onderdonk called on me to inquire what had been done.

Upon my telling him that among the rejected hymns was this one of mine, he said, 'That will never do,' and went about among the members of the committee soliciting them to restore the hymn in their report, which accordingly they did, so that to him is due the credit of giving it to the church."

This was probably the first hymn that Muhlenberg ever wrote, as it is certainly the one best known. It was based on the words of Job, "I would not live alway: let me alone; for my days are vanity." As to what prompted it, there is considerable uncertainty. While living in Lancaster he experienced a heartbreaking disappointment in a matter of love, and for years the story was current that the hymn voiced his feelings at that time. On good authority the report has been both affirmed and denied. We know that the hymn was written during this period; that when he gave up his work at Lancaster he "left behind him the grave of his earthly hopes"; and that he never married. Evidently he wrote at a time of great depression. There is nothing akin to it in his later writings. The opening verses betray a morbid spirit, utterly unlike what we would look for in a healthy-minded young man:

"I would not live alway; I ask not to stay
Where storm after storm rises dark o'er the way:

The few lurid mornings that dawn on us here
Are enough for life's woes, full enough for its cheer.

"I would not live alway; no, welcome the tomb!
Since Jesus hath lain there, I dread not its gloom;
There sweet be my rest till he bid me arise,
To hail him in triumph descending the skies."

In later years Dr. Muhlenberg deeply regretted having written this hymn. As he was wont to say: "Paul's 'For me to live is Christ' is far better than Job's 'I would not live alway.'" He tried again and again, by alteration and rewriting, to undo the mistake of his youth, but in vain. The original hymn had so impressed itself upon the heart of the church that no substitute would be accepted. It gained an immediate and universal popularity. No doubt the closing stanzas, with their look beyond the tomb, have done much to atone for the lugubrious spirit running through the earlier part:

"Who, who would live alway, away from his God?
Away from yon heaven, that blissful abode,
Where the rivers of pleasure flow o'er the bright plains,
And the noontide of glory eternally reigns;

"Where the saints of all ages in harmony meet,
Their Saviour and brethren transported to greet;
While the anthems of rapture unceasingly roll,
And the smile of the Lord is the feast of the soul."

Dr. Theodore L. Cuyler, whose taste in the matter of hymns was unusually discriminating,

has told us that of all Dr. Muhlenberg's contributions, the one on Noah's Dove was his favorite. It is a touching appeal to the wandering soul to find rest where rest only can be found, in the Ark of God's Love. It was written when the author was a young man, and is in the 1826 collection:

"Like Noah's weary dove,
That soared the earth around,
But not a resting place above
The cheerless waters found;

"O cease, my wandering soul,
On restless wing to roam;
All the wide world, to either pole,
Has not for thee a home.

"Behold the ark of God,
Behold the open door;
Hasten to gain that dear abode,
And rove, my soul, no more.

"There, safe shalt thou abide,
There, sweet shall be thy rest,
And every longing satisfied,
With full salvation blest.

"And when the waves of ire
Again the earth shall fill,
The ark shall ride the sea of fire,
Then rest on Sion's hill."

The hymn which follows is perhaps more widely used at the present time than any other by Dr. Muhlenberg. It is intended to be sung at a baptismal service for children, and many regard

it as the most perfect hymn for such an occasion that has ever been written. From the very beginning of his ministry, Dr. Muhlenberg was intensely devoted to the lambs of the flock. The baptism of a child was to him no ordinary event. It is recalled that when, just after his ordination, he was asked for the first time to perform this service, he hesitated. "His countenance suffused, his whole manner became embarrassed, and he earnestly requested Bishop White, who was present, to administer the rite for him." But the bishop insisted that the young man should do it, and from that time on the service became a delight to him. Once, after an absence, when he revisited his former parish in Lancaster, the children welcomed him so joyously that he exclaimed, "If the prayers of babes and sucklings are heard, I may hope for a blessing."

"Saviour, who thy flocks art feeding
With the shepherd's kindest care,
All the feeble gently leading,
While the lambs thy bosom share.

"Now, these little ones receiving,
Fold them in thy gracious arm;
There, we know, thy word believing,
Only there secure from harm.

"Never, from thy pasture roving,
Let them be the lion's prey;
Let thy tenderness, so loving,
Keep them through life's dangerous way.

"Then, within thy fold eternal,
Let them find a resting place,
Feed in pastures ever vernal,
Drink the rivers of thy grace."

Dr. Muhlenberg was intensely evangelical in his preaching. Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of men, was the center about whom all his thoughts gathered. He once said, "I never preached a sermon except with a view to save souls." It is not surprising therefore that one of his noblest hymns should be in celebration of the coming of the One mighty to save. A century ago, the well-known lyric by Thomas Moore, "Sound the loud timbrel o'er Egypt's dark sea," was very popular on both sides of the ocean, especially as sung to music composed by Charles Avison, an English church organist. Bishop Hobart admired the music, and while the new Episcopal hymn book of 1826 was in preparation, he begged young Muhlenberg to write something to go with Avison's tune. It was done, and the author adds that the Bishop "liked the verses I made so well that he had them struck off before the hymns were published, and sung in Trinity Church on Christmas Day." After these many years, this exultant hymn, to the tune "Avison," is as much a favorite as ever:

"Shout the glad tidings, exultingly sing,
Jerusalem triumphs, Messiah is King.

"Zion, the marvelous story be telling,
The Son of the Highest, how lowly his birth!
The brightest archangel in glory excelling,
He stoops to redeem thee, he reigns upon earth.

"Tell how he cometh; from nation to nation,
The heart-cheering news let the earth echo round;
How free to the faithful he offers salvation,
How his people with joy everlasting are crowned.

"Mortals, your homage be gratefully bringing,
And sweet let the gladsome hosanna arise;
Ye angels, the full Alleluia be singing;
One chorus resound through the earth and the skies."

PHŒBE HINSDALE BROWN

CHAPTER XI

MRS. BROWN, MRS. HYDE

Phœbe Hinsdale Brown

1783–1861

No one who had chanced to meet her as a girl would ever have dreamed that Phœbe Hinsdale would become the first female American hymnist whose work would live. Born in Canaan, New York, in 1783, at the age of ten months bereft of her father, and of her mother a year later, the little waif found a refuge in the home of her grandparents, Allen. Here she spent seven happy years, when once again death robbed her of a shelter. This time an older married sister took her in. The husband was a rough man, keeper of the county jail, and from the start the child was badly treated. She was worse than a drudge—a domestic slave. Long afterward, her son said that it broke his heart to think of the "privation and cruel treatment and toil" which his mother endured in those bitter years.

Thus it continued till she was eighteen. In all this time she never was allowed to go to school. She could not even write her own name. Finally she managed to spend three months in a class with some children—the only schooling she ever had.

She now found another home, where she was most kindly treated, and where she joined the church. At the age of twenty-two she was married to Timothy H. Brown, a house-painter. A few years later they moved to Ellington, Connecticut, and soon she began to use her pen, contributing short stories and poems to two or three weekly papers. But her lot continued to be a hard one. Her husband was a worthy man, but they were very poor.

The summer of 1818 was unusually trying. The family lived on the edge of the village, in a small frame house, unfinished excepting one room which was occupied by a sick sister. There were four young children, and the home cares were unceasing. Mrs. Brown was a deeply religious woman, and she longed for some quiet spot to which she could retire each day for a few minutes of devotion.

A little distance down the road was a large garden, with a handsome residence at the upper end. Here was just the retreat she sought. She tells us that in the evening she [1]"used to steal away from all within doors, and, going out of our gate, stroll along under the elms that were planted for shade on each side of the road. And, as there was seldom anyone passing that way

[1] This account from the manuscript autobiography of Mrs. Brown, first appeared in *The Friend* of Honolulu, and is quoted by Dr. Duffield in *English Hymns*, p. 244.

after dark, I felt quite retired and alone with God. I often walked quite up that beautiful garden—and felt that I could have the privilege of those few moments of uninterrupted communion with God without encroaching upon anyone."

But one evening in August she chanced to be visiting at the home of a friend, where, among others who were present, was the lady who lived in the fine house. Suddenly turning to Mrs. Brown, she said with a lofty air: "Mrs. Brown, why do you come up at evening so near our house, and then go back without coming in? If you want anything, why don't you come in and ask for it? I could not think who it was, and sent my girl down the garden to see; and she said it was you. That you came to the fence, but, seeing her, turned quickly away, muttering something to yourself." Mrs. Brown adds: "There was something in her manner more than in her words, that grieved me. I went home, and that evening was left alone. After my children were all in bed, except my baby, I sat down in the kitchen, with my child in my arms, when the grief of my heart burst forth in a flood of tears. I took pen and paper, and gave vent to my oppressed heart in what I called 'My Apology for my Twilight Rambles, addressed to a Lady.'" She sent it to the lady in question, but what impression

was made is not known, as no reply was ever received.

This "Apology," in a shortened form, is the "Twilight Hymn" which is found in so many hymnals, and is so much loved. In the original there were nine stanzas, as follows:

["Yes, when the toilsome day is gone,
And night, with banners gray,
Steals silently the glade along
In twilight's soft array,]

"I love to steal awhile away
From little ones and care,
And spend the hours of setting day
In gratitude and prayer.

["I love to feast on Nature's scenes
When falls the evening dew,
And dwell upon her silent themes,
Forever rich and new.]

"I love in solitude to shed
The penitential tear,
And all God's promises to plead
Where none can see or hear.

"I love to think on mercies past,
And future ones implore,
And all my cares and sorrows cast
On him whom I adore.

["I love to meditate on death!
When shall his message come
With friendly smiles to steal my breath
And take an exile home?]

"I love by faith to take a view
Of blissful scenes in heaven;
The sight doth all my strength renew,
While here by storms I'm driven.

["I love this silent twilight hour
Far better than the rest;
It is, of all the twenty-four,
The happiest and the best.]

"Thus, when life's toilsome day is o'er,
May its departing ray
Be calm as this impressive hour
And lead to endless day."

Mrs. Brown kept this poem hidden among her private papers for several years. But when Dr. Nettleton was compiling his *Village Hymns,* hearing that she had written some religious poetry, he visited her, and she gave him four hymns, among them this one. The nine stanzas were reduced to five by omitting those bracketed above. A few verbal changes were also made. The line "From little ones and care," became, "From every cumbering care"; and the line "In gratitude and prayer," was changed to "In humble, grateful prayer." But the stanzas now in use are practically as they came from her pen. Later, she wrote a Morning Hymn and also a Midday Hymn, but neither has ever gained the popularity of her Twilight Hymn, born under such pathetic circumstances.

In the fall of 1818 the family moved from Ellington across the State line into Massachusetts, and settled in Monson. The church seemed spiritually dead and Mrs. Brown's ardent soul was greatly distressed, "From the impulses of a full heart," so she tells us, was written her "Prayer for a Revival," beginning with the lines:

"O Lord, thy work revive,
In Zion's gloomy hour,
And make her dying graces live
By thy restoring power."

For many years this hymn was widely sung in America, and it also gained favor in England.

This devoted Christian mother, who gave to her "little ones" such untiring care, was not disappointed in her children. Two of her daughters became preachers' wives, and the third married a prominent church deacon. But the son, the Rev. Samuel R. Brown, D.D., came into largest prominence. He was born in 1810, and in infancy his mother dedicated him to the work of the Kingdom. Foreign missions were just beginning to stir the church to new zeal. Here and there young people were offering themselves for service in distant fields. One day, when Samuel was seven years old, the mother fell to dreaming—Would God some time call her son? Her heart leaped at the thought, and doubtless it was in her mind when she wrote this missionary hymn:

"Go messenger of love, and bear,
Upon thy gentle wing,
The song which seraphs love to hear,
The angels joy to sing.

"Go, to the heart with sin opprest,
And dry the sorrowing tear;
Extract the thorn that wounds the breast,
The drooping spirit cheer.

"Go, say to Zion, 'Jesus reigns'—
By his resistless power,
He binds his enemies with chains;
They fall to rise no more.

"Tell how the Holy Spirit flies,
As he from heaven descends—
Arrests his proudest enemies,
And changes them to friends."

The mother's highest hopes were fulfilled, when, in 1838, her son sailed as a pioneer missionary to China. In 1859 he transferred his field to Japan, being the first American missionary to enter that newly opened empire. Later on, two grandsons of Mrs. Brown took up mission work in that same country.

"As to my history, it is soon told; a sinner saved by grace and sanctified by trials." Thus she wrote in old age. Both her joys and her trials had been many, and one of the sweetest hymns that she wrote, belonging to the later period of her life, expresses her own ripened experience:

"When grief and anguish press me down,
And hope and comfort flee,
I cling, bless'd Saviour, to thy throne,
And stay my heart on thee.

"When clouds of dark temptation rise,
And pour their wrath on me,
To thee, for aid, I turn my eyes,
And fix my trust on thee.

"When death invades my peaceful home,
The sundered ties shall be
A closer bond, in time to come,
To bind my heart to thee.

"Lord—'not my will but thine be done':
My soul, from fear set free,
Her faith shall anchor at thy throne,
And trust alone in thee."

Mrs. Brown died in 1861, and was buried at Monson, Massachusetts, within a stone's throw of the modest little cottage which for so many years was her home. Beside her lie the remains of her distinguished son.

Abigail Bradley Hyde

1799–1872

In 1818, the same year in which Mrs. Brown wrote, "I love to steal awhile away," a young woman of kindred spirit, Miss Abigail Bradley, was united in marriage to the Rev. Lavius Hyde. A little later, Mr. Hyde began a pastorate at Ellington, Connecticut, the home of Mrs. Brown

when she wrote her hymn, and it was here that the two women met and formed an acquaintance which continued for many years.

Although Mrs. Hyde possessed only moderate talent as a hymnist, and composed very little which is in use at the present time, two generations ago nearly fifty of her poems were being sung, and were blessing multitudes all over the land. We owe it to Dr. Nettleton, as in the case of Mrs. Brown, that she was brought into notice. He was so well pleased with a missionary lyric which she wrote soon after her marriage that he induced her to contribute a number of selections to the *Village Hymns* he was preparing. They are strongly evangelistic in tone, but unlike many hymns of that period which portrayed the anguish of hell in lurid colors and sought to terrify sinners into repentance, hers were more moderate and were marked by a calm persuasiveness which made them doubly effective. The following stanzas gained very wide circulation:

"And canst thou, sinner, slight
The call of love divine?
Shall God with tenderness invite,
And gain no thought of thine?

"Wilt thou not cease to grieve
The Spirit from thy breast,
Till he thy wretched soul shall leave
With all thy sins oppressed?

"To-day a pardoning God
Will hear the suppliant pray;
To-day, a Saviour's cleansing blood
Will wash thy guilt away.

'But grace so dearly bought
If yet thou wilt despise,
Thy fearful doom, with sorrow fraught,
Will fill thee with surprise."

Mrs. Hyde was especially fond of children, and as a pastor's wife probably her most effective work was done among them. She had no sympathy with the view so widely prevalent in those days that it was of little use to bring children to Christ; that they must first be expected to sow their wild oats and then be converted. She longed to gather them within the fold, even though some of them might afterward stray away. Her most beautiful hymn, and the one, more than any other, showing the real heart of the woman, was written in her early twenties, and is entitled, "Prayer for the children of the Church." It deserves to be treasured after all else from the same pen has been forgotten:

"Dear Saviour, if these lambs should stray,
From thy secure enclosure's bound,
And, lured by worldly joys away,
Among the thoughtless crowd be found.

"Remember still that they are thine,
That thy dear sacred name they bear,
Think that the seal of love divine—
The sign of cov'nant grace they wear.

"In all their erring, sinful years,
Oh, let them ne'er forgotten be:
Remember all the prayers and tears,
Which made them consecrate to thee.

"And when these lips no more can pray,
These eyes can weep for them no more,
Turn thou their feet from folly's way,
The wanderers to thy fold restore."

CHAPTER XII

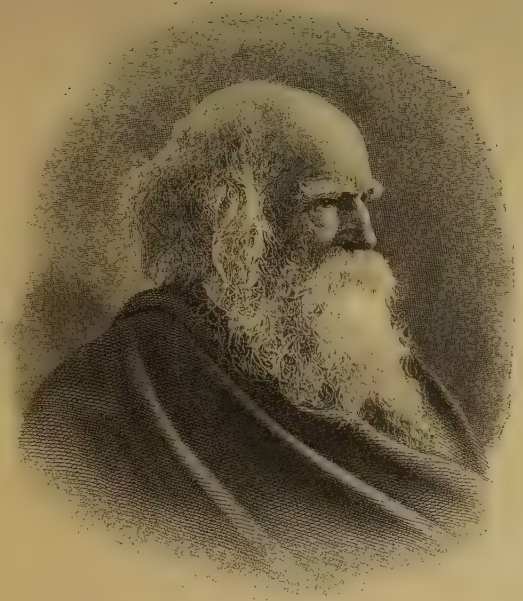
BRYANT, HOLMES

William Cullen Bryant

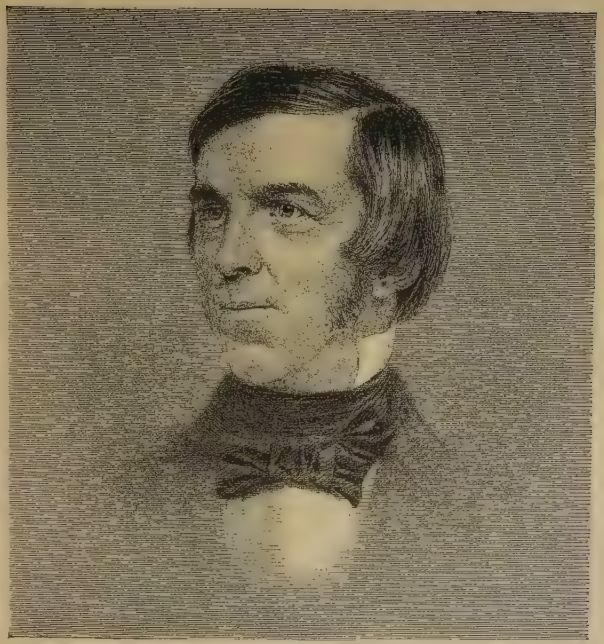
1794–1878

When the manuscript of "Thanatopsis" was handed to Richard H. Dana, senior editor of the *North American Review,* as an American production, he shook his head. "No one on this side of the Atlantic," said he, "is capable of writing such verses." Had he further been told that it was the work of a seventeen-year-old boy, he would have been struck dumb with amazement.

William Cullen Bryant was the first writer in the New World who merited the name of "poet." There had been a number of versifiers, and some of their lines will live, but America produced no real poet till Bryant appeared. He was born in Cummington, Massachusetts, on November 3, 1794. His father, a country physician, was a man of education and culture, a lover of poetry and himself an occasional writer. His library, unusually large and choice for those days, was especially rich in the great English poets. It was in an atmosphere of books and of religion that the boy grew up. To the close of his long life he could never forget



WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT



OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES

those early scenes, the family prayers, morning and evening, led by his grandfather Snell; church service on Sunday morning and afternoon, with a "neighborhood" meeting at home in the evening, conducted by "some lay brother"; the mid-winter "awakenings" or revivals, at the Congregational church, where the family attended; the little district school, visited from time to time by the parish minister, the man of God, held in veneration by old and young alike. On these state occasions the scholars were dressed in their Sunday best and were carefully examined in the Westminster Catechism.

As a child, William learned the Lord's Prayer and other petitions at his mother's knee, and then, one day, when all by himself, he added, what became a frequent and fervent request, that he "might receive the gift of poetic genius, and write verses that might endure." He was only eight when his first youthful poem appeared. The hymns of Isaac Watts, especially those written for children, he knew in many cases by heart, and when no more than five years old he would mount a chair and declaim them to imaginary audiences with boyish enthusiasm. Years afterward he still remembered the oldtime singing school, and the teacher who was an "enthusiast in his vocation, and thundered forth the airs set down in the music books, with a fervor that was contagious."

In 1820, Henry D. Sewall undertook the preparation of a hymn book for the Unitarians, who by this time had become somewhat numerous, especially in Massachusetts, and he appealed to Mr. Bryant for several contributions. The young man, already recognized as *facile princeps* among American poets, gladly accepted the invitation, and at once wrote five hymns for the new book. They illustrate his bent of mind—his love of nature and his disposition to brood upon death. The first one, in praise

> "To Him whose wisdom deigned to plan
> This fair and bright abode for man,"

must have been inspired, at least in part, by memories of the childhood home in western Massachusetts, for it goes on to sing of the country where

> "Rose the hills, and broad and green
> The vale's deep pathway sank between"

and where

> "earth's blossoms glowed,
> Her fountains gushed, her rivers flowed,
> And from the shadowy wood was heard
> The pleasant sound of breeze and bird."

As a mere child, Bryant was brought into close contact with death. Across the way from his birthplace was a rural graveyard; the funeral of one of his schoolmates made a deep impression

on him, as did the passing of his grandparents Snell, under whose roof he had grown up. Of an unusually serious and sensitive disposition, these early circumstances helped to shape the poet's mind, and doubtless contributed to that noble melancholy so conspicuous in Thanatopsis. But we find no trace of gloom or despair. The comforting hymn entitled, "Blessed are they that mourn"—one of the five mentioned above—is extensively used. At Mr. Bryant's funeral it was sung by the choir with marked effect:

"Deem not that they are blest alone
Whose days a peaceful tenor keep;
The God who loves our race has shown
A blessing for the eyes that weep.

"The light of smiles shall fill again
The lids that overflow with tears;
And weary hours of woe and pain
Are promises of happier years.

"Oh, there are days of sunny rest
For every dark and troubled night;
And Grief may bide an evening guest,
But Joy shall come with early light.

"And thou, who, o'er thy friend's low bier,
Dost shed the bitter drops like rain,
Hope that a brighter, happier sphere,
Will give him to thy arms again.

"Nor let the good man's trust depart,
Though life its common gifts deny;
Though with a pierced and bleeding heart,
And spurned of men, he goes to die.

"For God hath marked each sorrowing day,
And numbered every secret tear;
And heaven's long age of bliss shall pay
For all his children suffer here."

In a letter to a member of the committee which prepared the Methodist Episcopal Hymnal of 1878, Mr. Bryant changed the third line of the opening stanza to,

"The anointed Son of God makes known."

This was his final revision.

He had an unfaltering faith in a future life. Not long before his death he wrote to an inquirer: "I believe in the everlasting life of the soul; and it seems to me that immortality would be but an imperfect gift without the recognition in the life to come of those who are dear to us here."

The hymn beginning with the lines:

"Thou, whose unmeasured temple stands,
Built over earth and sea,
Accept the walls that human hands
Have raised, O God, to thee!"

is one of the best known of Bryant's hymns, and is a favorite both in England and America. It was written in 1826, for the dedication of the Second Unitarian Church, in Prince Street, New York.

More than one student of Bryant's hymns gives the first place to the contribution he made

in 1840 to be sung at a Home Missionary Anniversary. It was at a time when the subject of Home Missions, in the broader sense in which we are familiar with it to-day, was gripping the heart of the church. The population of the country was rapidly increasing. The "peopled vale" and "crowded mart" were creating new and serious problems. Home Missionary Societies were springing up on every hand and calling for suitable hymns. This hymn of Bryant's, so far superior to most in common use, was received with enthusiasm, and it has held a merited place ever since:

"Look from the sphere of endless day,
O God of mercy and of might!
In pity look on those who stray,
Benighted, in this land of light.

"In peopled vale, in lonely glen,
In crowded mart, by stream or sea,
How many of the sons of men
Hear not the message sent from thee!

"Send forth thy heralds, Lord, to call
The thoughtless young, the hardened old,
A scattered, homeless flock, till all
Be gathered to thy peaceful fold.

"Send them thy mighty word to speak,
Till faith shall dawn, and doubt depart,
To awe the bold, to stay the weak,
And bind and heal the broken heart.

"Then all these wastes, a dreary scene,
That make us sadden as we gaze,
Shall grow with living waters green,
And lift to heaven the voice of praise."

By nature Mr. Bryant was profoundly religious. He was not only given to private devotion, but he was an earnest believer in family prayer. His sensitive soul shrank from the stern New England theology in which he was reared, and after moving to New York he became a pewholder in the First Congregational (now the All Souls) Unitarian Church. But when at his summer home at Roslyn, Long Island, he habitually attended the Presbyterian Church, and joined in the communion service.

In 1858 he had a rare experience. While traveling abroad, Mrs. Bryant was taken dangerously ill in Naples, and for days she hovered between life and death. The Rev. R. C. Waterston, a friend of the family, chanced to be in the city at the same time. Mr. Waterston relates that one day, after the crisis had passed, he received a note from Mr. Bryant "stating that there was a subject of interest upon which he would like to converse with me. On the following day, the weather being delightful, we walked in the royal park or garden overlooking the Bay of Naples. Never can I forget the beautiful spirit that breathed through every word he ut-

tered, the reverent love, the confiding trust, the aspiring hope, the rooted faith. . . . He said that he had never united himself with the church, which, with his present feeling, he would most gladly do. He then asked if it would be agreeable to me to come to his room on the morrow and administer the communion, adding that, as he had never been baptized, he desired that ordinance at the same time. The day following was the Sabbath, and a most heavenly day. In fulfillment of his wishes, in his own quiet room, a company of seven persons celebrated together the Lord's Supper. . . . Previous to the breaking of bread, William Cullen Bryant was baptized. With snow-white head and flowing beard, he stood like one of the ancient prophets, and perhaps never, since the days of the apostles, has a truer disciple professed allegiance to the divine Master."

His sincere reverence for the Redeemer of men is particularly conspicuous in his hymns. On his wife's tombstone he placed the words: "An Humble Disciple of Christ"—and they were equally true of himself. In March, 1875, the Church of the Messiah, in Boston, celebrated its semicentennial. Bryant had known it from the beginning, and at one time had been an attendant there. By urgent request he contributed a hymn for the occasion—one of the sweetest he ever wrote. As he said in a letter to a friend,

"I have written a little hymn—contrary to my wont." The opening stanza seems especially appropriate from the pen of an octogenarian.

THE STAR OF BETHLEHEM

"As shadows cast by cloud and sun
Flit o'er the summer grass,
So, in thy sight, Almighty One!
Earth's generations pass.

"And while the years, an endless host,
Come pressing swiftly on,
The brightest names that earth can boast
Just glisten, and are gone.

"Yet doth the Star of Bethlehem shed
A lustre pure and sweet;
And still it leads, as once it led,
To the Messiah's feet.

. . . . . .

"O Father, may that holy Star
Grow every year more bright,
And send its glorious beam afar
To fill the world with light."

This hymn was one of the contributions the poet made to the Methodist Episcopal Hymnal of 1878.

Bryant was not a prolific hymn writer, his total productions of this kind numbering less than thirty. Most of them have that stately thoughtfulness which characterizes his poetry as a whole. While he wrote nothing which has attained the first rank in world hymnody, a num-

ber of his hymns have gained wide circulation both in this country and in England, and he ranks high among American hymnists.

Oliver Wendell Holmes,

1809–1894

It was a wonderful year, the year 1809, for the number of great lives that it gave to the world. In that twelve-month were born Elizazeth Barrett Browning, Alfred Tennyson, Charles Darwin, Oliver Wendell Holmes, William Ewart Gladstone, and Abraham Lincoln—a goodly fellowship indeed! Holmes came of choice New England ancestry, a fact which never ceased to give him keen satisfaction, for he was a bit of an aristocrat. His father, the Rev. Abiel Holmes, was pastor of the First Congregational Church of Cambridge, and belonged to the old school of thinkers. But in spite of his theology he must have had a cheerful heart, for in later years they spoke of him as "that most delightful of sunny old men."

Born under the shadow of Harvard, it was natural that Oliver should go there to college. He graduated in the class of 1829, which, as class poet, he did so much to make famous. He entered the profession of medicine, and here one of the leading characteristics of the man came to the fore. He had an exquisitely sensitive soul.

"He was too sympathetic to practice medicine." He became professor of anatomy and physiology. He knew that vivisection was necessary, but in his heart he hated it. His assistant wrote of him: "When it became necessary to have a freshly killed rabbit for his lecture, he always ran out of the room, left me to chloroform it, and besought me not to let it squeak." And wrote another: "Into all his professional studies he carries the same kindly, tender heart. Thirty years afterward there is still a sob in his throat when he speaks of the little child in the hospital cot, whose fresh voice yet rang in his ears." In old age he said one day to a friend, "Outside I laugh; inside I never laugh. It is impossible; the world is too sad."

It is easy to understand how such a soul, so sensitive and sympathetic, would be affected by the theological atmosphere in which he was reared. He could never forget the teachings of his childhood; the old doctrines, that he and his companions, unregenerate imps, in the sight of God were "vipers, and worse than vipers"; the lessons from the catechism which he and his brothers and sisters used to recite, when they learned that they "were a set of little fallen wretches, exposed to the wrath of God by the fact of that existence which they could not help." Those were the days when in orthodox circles

people talked gliby of hell and damnation, when it was felt that it enhanced the glory of God that the many were lost and the few saved, and that the surest way to exalt Deity was to degrade man. Holmes long remembered how "now and then would come along a clerical visitor with a sad face and a wailing voice, which sounded exactly as if somebody must be lying dead upstairs."

As a child he questioned and wondered and doubted, and as he grew older and came to understand the current teaching, his whole soul revolted against it. He felt that the old theology did a vast injustice to both God and man. He offended many by his outspoken protests, but no one who knew Oliver Wendell Holmes could for a moment doubt his unswerving loyalty to what he believed to be the truth. He was profoundly religious. No irreverent word ever escaped his tongue or pen.

All his life he was a regular attendant at church, usually at King's Chapel, where he was a member for more than half a century. One of his most admired friends, whom he delighted to hear, was Phillips Brooks. He never stated his creed; it is doubtful if he ever formulated one. The Fatherhood of God was to him the supreme truth. He also had an abiding faith in man, both for the present and for the future. Talk-

ing one day with Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, he spoke of Farrar's "Eternal Hope." "I cannot get beyond it," he said reverently. And, with breaking voice, he added, " 'Eternal Hope'—I cannot talk about the title of that book. It moves me too much. It goes too deep."

Holmes was ambitious to be a poet. He would rather have been a great poet than anything else. He was barely twenty-one when "Old Ironsides" was printed and carried his name all over the land. This was followed by a multitude of poems, but among them were very few hymns. What he might have done along this line, had he devoted himself to it, can be judged from the high character of the verses he has given us. As old age crept on it was gratifying to him to remember that his pen had not been entirely idle; as he expressed himself to a friend, "It would be one of the most agreeable reflections to me, if I could feel that I had left a few [hymns] worthy to be remembered after me." He was fond of hymns and he had very definite tastes in the matter. He was singularly drawn—and the fact throws a flood of light on the deeper religious nature of the man—to the hymns of some of the older writers. He spoke to Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe of his love for "dear old Dr. Watts with his tender songs that lulled me when I was a baby, and will mingle, I doubt not, with my last

wandering thoughts." And one day he said to Mrs. Annie Fields: "There are very few modern hymns that have the old ring of saintliness in them. Sometimes when I am disinclined to listen to the preacher at church, I turn to the hymn-book, and when one strikes my eye, I cover the name at the bottom, and guess. It is almost invariably Watts or Wesley; after those, there are very few which are good for much."

Temperamentally Dr. Holmes was not especially interested in public affairs, but when the Civil War broke out he was mightily stirred. He wrote the "Puritan War Song" to be sung by the troops on the march south, beginning with the lines:

"Where are you going, soldiers,
With banner, gun, and sword?
'We're marching South to Canaan
To battle for the Lord!'
What Captain leads your armies
Along the rebel coasts?
'The Mighty One of Israel,
His name is Lord of Hosts.
To Canaan, to Canaan
The Lord has led us forth
To blow before the heathen walls
The trumpet of the North!' "

His own son, Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., now Associate Justice of the United States Supreme Court, was among those who responded to

the nation's call, and later on, when the young man was wounded in battle, the anxious-hearted father hurried south to give him his personal care. Early in the war, as parents were watching their soldier-boys starting for the front, this poet-father wrote his "Army Hymn," still often used on patriotic occasions. It opens with these stanzas:

"O Lord of Hosts! Almighty King!
Behold the sacrifice we bring!
To every arm thy strength impart,
Thy spirit shed through every heart!

"Wake in our breasts the living fires,
The holy faith that warmed our sires;
Thy hand hath made our nation free;
To die for her is serving thee."

As the war progressed and the carnage increased, and day after day the dread tidings came that this one had been wounded and that one had been killed, and homes all about him were shrouded in anxiety and in mourning, the poet wrote again:

"Father of Mercies, heavenly Friend,
We seek thy gracious throne;
To thee our faltering prayers ascend,
Our fainting hearts are known!

"From blasts that chill, from suns that smite,
From every plague that harms;
In camp and march, in siege and fight,
Protect our men-at-arms!

'Though from our darkened lives they take
What makes our life most dear,
We yield them for their country's sake
With no relenting tear.

"Our blood their flowing veins will shed,
Their wounds our breasts will share;
O, save us from the woes we dread,
Or grant us strength to bear!"

In more than one respect the Class of 1829 was the most famous that Harvard University ever sent out. It included a number of men who afterward became noted, such as Congressman George T. Davis, George T. Bigelow, Chief Justice of Massachusetts, B. R. Curtis of the United States Supreme Court, Rev. James Freeman Clarke, S. F. Smith, author of "America," and, perhaps the most distinguished of all, Oliver Wendell Holmes. The annual class gatherings were events of no small importance, and as time went on they began to attract attention even beyond Harvard circles. Through a long series of years Holmes furnished the class poem, occasionally two, and some of his best verse was written for these reunions. As a rule he read his odes, but once in a while he sang them. In 1869 he wrote two poems, the second entitled "Hymn for the Class Meeting." This one, marked by a tender, pathetic beauty, gained considerable popularity. It found its way into various hymn books and is in common use to-day:

"Thou Gracious Power, whose mercy lends
The light of home, the smile of friends,
Our gathered flock thine arms infold
As in the peaceful days of old.

. . . . . .

"For all the blessings life has brought,
For all its sorrowing hours have taught,
For all we mourn, for all we keep,
The hands we clasp, the loved that sleep;

"The noontide sunshine of the past,
These brief, bright moments fading fast,
The stars that gild our darkening years,
The twilight ray from holier spheres;

We thank thee, Father! let thy grace
Our narrowing circle still embrace,
Thy mercy shed its heavenly store,
Thy peace be with us evermore!"

In a letter to Harriet Beecher Stowe, Holmes once said, "My creed . . . is to be found in the first two words of the Pater Noster"—Our Father! He was constantly stressing it; it was uppermost in all of his talks and letters where the subject of religion entered in. The old theology had thrust God into the far distance, utterly out of sympathy with man. Holmes' belief in the divine fatherhood brought God very near, into close and tender touch with his needy children. A fundamental article in the poet's unwritten creed was that "God is Love!" He believed it, he preached it, with all the fervor of his

soul. He never wrote more intensely than in the lines:

"That one unquestioned text we read,
All doubt beyond, all fear above,
Nor crackling pile nor cursing creed
Can burn or blot it God is LOVE!"

The readers of *Elsie Venner* will remember how, in referring to a future life, Holmes puts on the lips of Helen the words: "It is all trust in God and in his Word. These are enough for me." In relation to his own experience, the poet often spoke of "trusting." These characteristics of his religious faith are seen in his "Hymn of Trust," among the poems in *The Professor at the Breakfast Table.* It is one of the most highly prized hymns that Holmes ever wrote, and is in use on both sides of the Atlantic:

"O Love Divine, that stooped to share
Our sharpest pang, our bitterest tear,
On thee we cast each earthborn care;
We smile at pain while thou art near.

"Though long the weary way we tread,
And sorrow crown each lingering year,
No path we shun, no darkness dread,
Our hearts still whispering, thou art near.

"When drooping pleasure turns to grief
And trembling faith is changed to fear,
The murmuring wind, the quivering leaf,
Shall softly tell us, thou art near.

"On thee we fling our burdening woe,
O Love Divine, forever dear;
Content to suffer while we know,
Living and dying, thou art near."

The chapters of *The Professor at the Breakfast Table* were first published in successive numbers of the *Atlantic Monthly,* during the year 1859. The December chapter closed with these words: "And so my year's record is finished. . . . Peace to all such as may have been vexed in spirit by any utterance the pages have repeated. They will doubtless forget for the moment the difference in the hues of truth we look at through our human prism, and join in singing (inwardly) this hymn to the Source of light we all need to lead us and the warmth which can make us all brothers." Then followed "A Sunday Hymn":

"Lord of all being, throned afar,
Thy glory flames from sun and star;
Center and soul of every sphere,
Yet to each loving heart how near!

"Sun of our life, thy quickening ray
Sheds on our path the glow of day;
Star of our hope, thy softened light
Cheers the long watches of the night.

"Our midnight is thy smile withdrawn;
Our noontide is thy gracious dawn;
Our rainbow arch, thy mercy's sign;
All, save the clouds of sin, are thine.

"Lord of all life, below, above,
Whose light is truth, whose warmth is love,
Before thy ever-blazing throne
We ask no luster of our own.

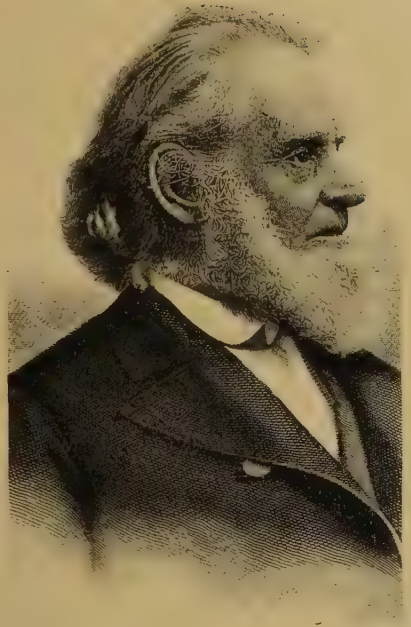
"Grant us thy truth to make us free,
And kindling hearts that burn for thee,
Till all thy living altars claim
One holy light, one heavenly flame."

This noble lyric is greatly admired in both England and America and is more widely used than any other hymn that Holmes wrote. A few years ago when the *Survey* of New York was preparing to issue a hymnbook of one hundred selections, a jury of twelve men, of all faiths and social beliefs, Jew, Ethical Culture, Socialist, etc., was asked to choose the hymns. As might have been expected there was wide disagreement. But of all the hymns submitted, four succeeded in obtaining eight votes each, and one of the four was this "Sunday Hymn." And indeed, the very qualities which make this hymn so generally acceptable have brought upon it severe criticism, because, forsooth, "it could be sung as well by Parsees or Buddhists" as by Christians! But if in the whole range of church hymnody, here and there a hymn be found breathing the spirit of humble and loving worship, and of devoted trust in the "Lord of all being"—and so framed that it appeals to those of every creed who look up

with aspiring hearts to the "Lord of all life," is it not rather a matter of joy and gratitude than of alarm and censure?

The last time that Dr. Holmes appeared in public was at a celebration of the Boston Young Men's Christian Union. He brought a message in verse, closing with this petition which seems to open a window into the very heart of the old man of eighty-four:

"Our prayers accept; our sins forgive;
Our youthful zeal renew;
Shape for us holier lives to live
And nobler work to do."



LEONARD BACON

GEORGE DUFFIELD, JR.

GEORGE WASHINGTON BETHUNE

CHAPTER XIII

BACON, DUFFIELD, BETHUNE

Leonard Bacon

1802–1881

The closing years of the eighteenth century and the opening years of the nineteenth, witnessed a most remarkable awakening of missionary zeal on both sides of the Atlantic. In 1795 the London Missionary Society was launched, followed in less than four years by the great Church Missionary Society. Already, in 1793, William Carey had sailed for India, the first foreign representative of the Baptist Churches of England, and about the same time Dr. Coke was organizing the work of the British Wesleyans.

Naturally the mother country with its older and stronger churches led the way, but America was not far behind. The famous "Haystack Meeting," which was followed by the organization of the American Board, was held in 1806. The Baptists started their society in 1814, the Methodists in 1819, and the Episcopalians one year later. Within a single generation practically all of the larger denominations had en-

tered upon a movement for world evangelization. Throughout the country a growing enthusiasm was felt for carrying the gospel to heathen nations as well as to the unchristianized Indian tribes of our own land. Missionary sermons were preached, appeals for money were sent broadcast, all manner of gatherings were held, with the occasional thrilling farewells for departing workers.

Nowhere did the spirit of the times show itself more clearly than in the large number of missionary hymns which began to appear, and which were sung with great fervor. For example, in Nettleton's *Village Hymns* which were published in 1824, there was an entire section of fifty-one hymns on missions, a remarkable collection for that or for any day. While a number of these came from abroad, some very creditable ones were of American origin.

Detroit was an uncouth village of scarcely two thousand inhabitants, when, on a Saturday afternoon in May, 1801, a weary preacher of the gospel trudged into town. He had with him a horse on which his seventeen-year-old bride rode. They had been traveling since February, having been sent out by the Congregational Missionary Society of Connecticut to evangelize the Indians of Michigan. The following winter they welcomed their first-born, a little son, whom they

named "Leonard." The boy inherited the missionary zeal of his parents, and he would gladly have devoted his own life to work among the northwest tribes had not the Divine leading been otherwise. At the age of fifteen he was back in New England. His father had died and he was the mainstay of his mother and six younger brothers and sisters. And yet, in spite of his burdens, he went through Yale, graduating with high honor, and when a youth of only twenty-three he became pastor of the famous Centre Church, New Haven.

Here Mr. Bacon had a remarkable career, lasting more than forty years. In his opening sermon he said: "All my preaching must be designed to bring you to Christ. It must begin and end with Christ, Christ, none but Christ." This was the keynote of his entire ministry. He longed above all else to see Christ supreme in the life of the world, and he believed that it would come to pass. After his death, his son wrote of him: "I have found in a drawer of his table some of his old college declamations, and am touched with the fervid warmth of the boy's hope and expectation that the conversion of the whole world to the faith of Christ was about to be achieved." His soul was possessed with this thought when a youth, and it never left him.

In 1823 he prepared the first collection of

hymns for missionary meetings ever printed in America. It is here that we find his hymn on "The Missionary's Death":

"Weep not for the saint that ascends
To partake of the joys of the sky;
Weep not for the seraph that bends
With the worshiping chorus on high.

. . . . . .

"[But weep] for the nations that dwell
Where the light of the truth never shone,
Where anthems of praise never swell,
And the love of the Lamb is unknown."

Soon after becoming pastor of Centre Church he instituted a decided innovation and one that had a far-reaching influence for good. Once a month, on Sunday evening, a missionary meeting was held, in which several of the larger churches of the city united. These meetings were known as "Monthly Concerts," and they gave Dr. Bacon just the opportunity that he coveted. In the words of his son, "he was accustomed to unroll, from month to month and from year to year, the panorama of the whole world's current history, in its bearing on the one controlling thought of his life—the advancing reign of Jesus Christ over the human race." What occasions they were! The crowded assemblies, Yale men present in large numbers, the fervid singing of missionary hymns, most of them recently composed, and several of them by the pastor of the church him-

self; the passionate message of the young preacher, who from afar had beheld the coming of the Lord! One of the hymns sung at these services was the following, written by Dr. Bacon during his years at Centre Church:

"Though now the nations sit beneath
The darkness of o'erspreading death,
God will arise, with light divine
On Zion's holy towers to shine.

"That light shall shine on distant lands,
And wandering tribes, in joyful bands,
Shall come thy glory, Lord, to see,
And in thy courts to worship thee.

"O light of Zion, now arise!
Let the glad morning bless our eyes!
Ye nations, catch the kindling ray,
And hail the splendor of the day."

We are accustomed to such meetings in these days, but remember that the "Monthly Concerts" began nearly one hundred years ago, when the whole subject of foreign missions was more or less of a novelty. What the full effect may have been through the years, especially on the student body, no one can estimate. Yale has sent hundreds of men into the foreign field; how many of them received their initial impulse at Centre Church? As pastor, and later as lecturer, Dr. Bacon was in close touch with the College for fifty-six years, till his death in 1881. The Student

Volunteer Movement was launched in 1886. There can be no doubt that the "Monthly Concerts" and the lifelong enthusiasm of this missionary zealot did very much to create and stimulate the spirit of missionary endeavor which has been sweeping through our American colleges in recent years.

In 1833 the Bicentenary of New Haven was celebrated, and Leonard Bacon wrote a hymn for the occasion, of which four stanzas are often sung at the present time. They admirably illustrate his unswerving confidence in that divine Providence which had guided the steps of the fathers in their venturesome journeyings over land and sea, and which was still leading the church on to the conquest of the world:

"O God, beneath thy guiding hand
Our exiled fathers crossed the sea;
And when they trod the wintry strand,
With prayer and psalm they worshiped thee.

"Thou heard'st, well pleased, the song, the prayer:
Thy blessing came; and still its power
Shall onward, through all ages, bear
The memory of that holy hour.

"Laws, freedom, truth, and faith in God
Came with those exiles o'er the waves;
And, where their pilgrim feet have trod,
The God they trusted guards their graves.

"And here thy Name, O God of love,
Their children's children shall adore
Till these eternal hills remove,
And spring adorns the earth no more."

George Duffield, Jr.

1818–1888

The family of Duffield has long been prominent in Presbyterian annals, and there has been frequent confusion as to the identity of the particular individual with whom we are now concerned. Writing in 1883, the author of "Stand up, stand up for Jesus" endeavored to set matters straight. "The author is not his father, Rev. George Duffield, D.D., the patriarch of Michigan, born in 1796, and who died at Detroit, 1868. Neither is he his son, Rev. Samuel W. Duffield, born in 1843. . . . His father has not yet lost his identity, and claims to be his own individual self, namely, Rev. George Duffield, A.M., pastor in Brooklyn, Long Island, seven years; in Bloomfield, New Jersey, four years; in Philadelphia, ten years, leaving there in 1861; and the rest of his life an active pastor in the West—more than forty years in all; born, 1818, . . . and now living in Detroit."

It was during his Philadelphia pastorate that the hymn which has carried his name around the earth was written. The winter of 1857-8 will always be remembered for the wonderful revival

of religion which spread over the land. Its gracious influence was felt far and wide, in city and hamlet, and especially in Philadelphia, where it was commonly referred to as "The work of God in Philadelphia." It was here that the Young Men's Christian Association, new in those days, had gained a particularly firm footing. Its leaders threw themselves into the movement with great zeal, and the revival soon developed remarkable strength among the young men of the community.

At the forefront in the quest for souls was a group of young clergymen, such as Alfred Cookman of the Methodist Episcopal Church, George Duffield of the Presbyterian Church, and Dudley A. Tyng of the Protestant Episcopal Church —all of them close and congenial friends.

A peculiar interest attached to Mr. Tyng. He was thirty-three years old at the time, gifted, of a noble heart and life, and with a most winning personality. Like his distinguished father, Stephen H. Tyng, D.D., he was a Low Churchman and an ardent believer in church union. One of the last messages he ever gave was at a Congregational celebration in New York, when he said: "We may come as near as possible to what some may call the deep and broad gulf that lies between us. How it is to be bridged over I do not know; but this I know, that I will stand as far

on this side of it as I can, and will reach out to grasp the hand of my Congregational brethren on the other side; and perhaps we may reach far enough to touch and hold each other fast, until, by the binding of loving hearts and hands, there may be constructed a living bridge, over which God's people may pass in spiritual union."

This fraternal attitude toward other denominations made him very unpopular with High Churchmen. But even more serious in its consequences was his pronounced hostility to slavery. He had been rector of the Church of the Epiphany, but the feeling against him, among the pro-Southerners, became so strong that he had been compelled to resign, and in 1857 he organized the Church of the Covenant, holding services in a public hall. During all these trying days he never wavered; he was standing up for Jesus. Mr. Tyng was the leading spirit at the noonday meetings held at Jayne's Hall, under the direction of the Y. M. C. A. On March 30, 1858, he himself was the preacher, taking as his text: "Go now, ye that are men, and serve the Lord." The place was packed; five thousand were present; the appeal was overwhelming, and it is said that fully a thousand men gave themselves to Jesus Christ.

Two weeks later he was at his country home, when he left his study to look at a corn-shelling

machine worked by mule-power in the barn. The sleeve of his gown got caught in the cogs and his arm was drawn in and so badly lacerated that a few days later, on Monday, April 19, he died. His last night on earth was one of intense suffering. As the morning broke he said to his father and the others watching at his bedside, "Sing! Sing! Can you not sing!" and he himself began to sing "Rock of Ages." The others tried to join in but their sobs overcame them. As the end drew near, Dr. Tyng, bending over his son, asked him if he had any farewell word for the young men and the ministers with whom he had been working. He waited a moment, and then with his last remaining strength he said, "Tell them, 'Let us all stand up for Jesus.' "

At the following noon service, when announcement was made of the tragic death of this noble young man and of the message he had sent to his fellow-workers, the whole audience was moved to tears; and as the news went abroad, the city was stirred. Among those present was Thomas H. Stockton, D.D., the eminent Methodist Protestant minister. Under the spell of this sad occasion he returned to his study and swiftly wrote some verses which were read at Jayne's Hall, and were afterward copied, and recited and sung all over the land. They have long since been forgotten, but in this connection they are worth re-

calling. The words are placed upon the lips of the dying minister:

"Stand up for Jesus! Strengthened by his hand,
Even I, though young, have ventured thus to stand;
But, soon cut down, as maimed and faint I lie,
Hear, O my friends! the charge with which I die:
Stand up for Jesus!

"Stand up for Jesus! All who lead his host!
Crowned with the splendors of the Holy Ghost!
Shrink from no foe, to no temptation yield,
Urge on the triumph of this glorious field:
Stand up for Jesus!

"Stand up for Jesus! Listeners to that word[1]
'Ye that are men, go now and serve the Lord!'
Only to serve in heaven, on earth I fall;
Ye who remain, still hear your comrade's call:
Stand up for Jesus!"

While this "Christian Ballad," as the author called it, is forgotten, the same occasion and the same charge inspired lines which are immortal. Returning from the funeral of his loved friend and colleague, Rev. George Duffield wrote the words of "Stand up, stand up for Jesus!"

The following Sunday he preached from the text, "Stand, therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness," and he recited these verses as a closing exhortation. He tells us that "the Su-

[1] Exod. 10. 2. Tyng's text in his sermon.

perintendent of the Sabbath school had a flyleaf printed for the children—a stray copy found its way into a Baptist newspaper—and from that paper it has gone in English, and in German and Latin translations, all over the world. The first time the author heard it sung, outside of his own denomination, was in 1864, as the favorite song of the Christian soldiers in the Army of the James."

Probably no hymn by an American writer, with the single exception of Ray Palmer's "My faith looks up to thee," is found in so many hymn books as Dr. Duffield's immortal lyric. Occasionally a compiler has changed a word or a line, but it has been done against the expressed desire of the author. "Since the night it was written," he says, "it has never been altered by the author in a single verse, a single line, or a single word, and it is his earnest wish that it shall continue unaltered until the Soldiers of the Cross shall replace it by something better." The original hymn consisted of six stanzas, of which the second and fifth are usually omitted in our collections. The hymn entire, as written by Dr. Duffield, is as follows:

"Stand up, stand up for Jesus!
Ye soldiers of the cross;
Lift high his royal banner,
It must not suffer loss:

From victory unto victory
His army he shall lead,
Till every foe is vanquished
And Christ is Lord indeed

"Stand up, stand up for Jesus!
The solemn watchword hear;
If while ye sleep he suffers,
Away with shame and fear;
Where'er ye meet with evil,
Within you or without,
Charge for the God of Battles,
And put the foe to rout!

"Stand up, stand up for Jesus!
The trumpet call obey;
Forth to the mighty conflict,
In this his glorious day:
Ye that are men, now serve him,
Against unnumbered foes;
Let courage rise with danger,
And strength to strength oppose.

"Stand up, stand up for Jesus!
Stand in his strength alone;
The arm of flesh will fail you,
Ye dare not trust your own:
Put on the gospel armor,
Each piece put on with prayer;
Where duty calls, or danger,
Be never wanting there.

"Stand up, stand up for Jesus!
Each soldier to his post;
Close up the broken column,
And shout through all the host:

Make good the loss so heavy,
In those that still remain,
And prove to all around you
That death itself is gain.

"Stand up, stand up for Jesus!
The strife will not be long;
This day the noise of battle,
The next the victor's song:
To him that overcometh,
A crown of life shall be;
He with the King of glory
Shall reign eternally."

George Washington Bethune
1805–1862

If George Washington Bethune had turned out badly, it would not have been the fault of his parents. The Journal kept by his father has been preserved, and here we read of the outpouring of the parent's heart in prayer, on the day George was born—March 18, 1805—dedicating the child to God, that he may "be made a faithful, honored and zealous minister of the everlasting gospel." And these prayers and this influence from both father and mother continued through the years.

The elder Bethune and his wife were of Scotch birth, and he was one of the leading citizens of New York, prominent as a merchant, as a philanthropist, and as a churchman. The son had every early advantage. He was so forward in his

studies that they admitted him to Columbia College when he was only fourteen. Later he changed to Dickinson College, where he graduated. Toward the close of his collegiate course he had a definite Christian experience, and determined to enter the ministry. In 1825, when but twenty years of age, he completed the work at Princeton Theological Seminary and received his ordination.

His first appointment was as chaplain to the seaman in the port of Savannah, and it was while there that he wrote "Life's Billows." It was his first hymn, and doubtless this was one reason why to the end of his life it was his favorite. In its simplicity and appropriateness of expression it possesses genuine merit. It opens with the stanza:

"Tossed upon life's raging billow,
Sweet it is, O Lord, to know;
Thou didst press a sailor's pillow,
And canst feel a sailor's woe.
Never slumbering, never sleeping,
Though the night be dark and drear,
Thou the faithful watch art keeping,
'All, all's well,' thy constant cheer."

A year later he returned north to accept the pastorate of a Dutch Reformed Church. He served various churches in Philadelphia, Brooklyn, and elsewhere. He was a man of broad scholarship and fine literary taste, of command-

ing power both in and out of the pulpit. The fact that he declined the Provostship of the University of Pennsylvania and the Chancellorship of New York University shows what the academic world thought of him. But he preferred to be a preacher. His last charge to his son and sons-in-law was: "My sons, preach the gospel. Tell dying sinners of a Saviour. All the rest is but folly."

He had a discriminating ear for music, and he sometimes composed sacred harmonies. He was especially fond of hymns, and as a rule he looked askance at hymn-tinkering. One Sunday morning at church, he stopped in the reading of a hymn and exclaimed to his startled choir: "This hymn is not as Cowper wrote it! Who has dared to alter a hymn of Cowper's? Sing it *thus* and not *so!*"

Failing health took him to Florence, Italy, in the fall of 1861. On Sunday morning, April 27 following, he was announced to preach at the Scotch Church. On the preceding Saturday evening, as he sat at the window watching the setting sun, he said to his wife: "O, Mary, how I wish that you loved Florence as I do! It is beautiful to live in and pleasant to die in." The next morning he preached, but he felt unwell when he returned home, and that night he died. In his portfolio they found this hymn, which he

must have written on the Saturday before the end:

"When time seems short and death is near,
And I am pressed by doubt and fear,
And sins, an overflowing tide,
Assail my peace on every side,
This thought my refuge still shall be,
I know the Saviour died for me.

"His name is Jesus, and he died,
For guilty sinners crucified;
Content to die that he might win
Their ransom from the death of sin:
No sinner worse than I can be,
Therefore I know he died for me.

"If grace were bought, I could not buy;
If grace were coined, no wealth have I;
By grace alone I draw my breath,
Held up from everlasting death;
Yet, since I know his grace is free,
I know the Saviour died for me."

Had he foreseen what a day would bring forth, he could not have penned a farewell message more appropriate than this. His body was embalmed and brought to New York. He had left directions concerning his funeral, "Sing my own hymn, 'It is not death to die,' to a cheerful tune." His whole life had been one of joyful trust in the Lord, and he wanted no undue sadness at the end. His wishes were carried out. The hymn to which he referred was a translation

which in an hour of inspiration he had made of a poem by the distinguished Swiss preacher, Cæsar Malan:

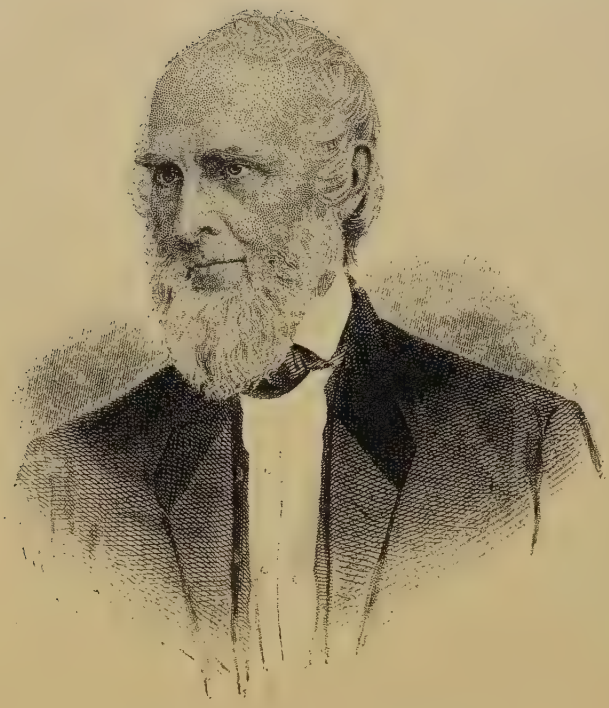
"It is not death to die,
To leave this weary road,
And midst the brotherhood on high
To be at home with God.

"It is not death to close
The eye long dimmed by tears,
And wake, in glorious repose
To spend eternal years.

"It is not death to bear
The wrench that sets us free
From dungeon chain, to breathe the air
Of boundless liberty.

"It is not death to fling
Aside this sinful dust,
And rise, on strong exulting wing,
To live among the just.

"Jesus, thou Prince of Life,
Thy chosen cannot die:
Like thee, they conquer in the strife,
To reign with thee on high."



JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

CHAPTER XIV

WHITTIER

John Greenleaf Whittier

1807–1892

To multitudes of people Whittier is the best-loved in the long roll of American Men of Letters. His quaint Quakerisms, his broad, tolerant spirit, his prevailing optimism, his deep human sympathy, together with the wonderful charm of his verse, have endeared him to the popular heart in a very peculiar way.

In all his habits of mind he was an American through and through. He was devoted to his New England hills, and was glad to spend his life in or near the house where he was born, and which his great-grandsire had erected in 1688. And yet his boyhood brought with it many hardships. While Emerson, Longfellow, Holmes, and Lowell were enjoying all the advantages of a liberal education, Whittier was wearing himself out with the heavy drudgery of farm-work. Swinging the flail so overtaxed his strength, and the absence of flannels and an overcoat in even the bitterest winter weather so exposed him, that the seeds of physical weakness were sown from which he never recovered.

He was ambitious for something better. His older sister saw him one evening, when a small boy, before the big kitchen fire writing on his slate:

"And must I always swing the flail,
And help to fill the milking pail?
I wish to go away to school;
I do not wish to be a fool."

But he was nineteen years old before he entered the doors of anything but an inferior district school. Then through his own industry, making shoes and teaching school, he earned enough to spend two seasons at the Haverhill Academy. In his father's home, humble as it was, there were a few books which young Whittier had read till he knew them by heart. Now he had access to a whole library, and he fairly reveled among its treasures. When he left the Academy, though he had only the rudiments of an education, he had caught a vision of greater things beyond; he never ceased to be a student.

In the meantime he had begun to write verses. One day, while still at home, he tells us that "we had a call from a 'pawky auld carle' of a wandering Scotchman. To him I owe my first introduction to the songs of Burns. After eating his bread and cheese and drinking his mug of cider, he gave us Bonny Doon, Highland Mary, and Auld Lang Syne. He had a rich, full voice, and

entered heartily into the spirit of his lyrics." We can readily imagine what a sensation such a seemingly trifling event must have made in that serious Quaker circle, where even the singing of a Psalm was never so much as thought of. The boy's imagination was aflame. He borrowed a copy of Burns from the district schoolmaster, and under the new stimulus he began in real earnest to write verses of his own.

It was in 1833 that for the first time Whittier really found himself. He was ambitious, rightfully so. Already his reputation as a poet was widespread; he had been successful as an editor; he was making his way in political circles; he was planning to run for Congress; when suddenly there came an appeal from Garrison to join the Abolition cause. To Whittier it was the call of God. He had always been a fearless champion of the right, now he was to enter the vanguard of the reformers. Loss of friends, blighting of political hopes, perils of mob violence? It mattered not. His was a holy crusade. The words he had made another say in his "Star of Bethlehem," were now his own:

"And what am I, o'er such a land
The banner of the Cross to bear?
Dear Lord, uphold me with thy hand.
Thy strength with human weakness share!"

Nothing could be stranger, or indeed, more

humorous—were it not for the terrible seriousness of it—than the spectacle of this peace-loving, inoffensive Quaker, who would rather have suffered imprisonment and torture than to have shouldered a gun and gone to the front, using, with relentless and fiery zeal, the even deadlier weapons of his heart and brain against the defenders of slavery. But it was characteristic of the man. His soul was bent on lifting his brother-man, not alone the slaves in the South, but the oppressed and the needy of every land, whether under the tyranny of State or Church or Industry.

To Whittier, as to every true worshiper of God, divine homage does not consist in "the pomp of rituals, and the savor of gums and spices"; it is far more than this. In his poem entitled "Worship," written during the stress of the antislavery movement, his thought reaches its climax in the closing verses, which very fittingly have found a place in a number of our hymn books:

"O brother man! fold to thy heart thy brother;
Where pity dwells, the peace of God is there;
To worship rightly is to love each other,
Each smile a hymn, each kindly deed a prayer.

"Follow with reverent steps the great example
Of Him whose holy work was 'doing good';
So shall the wide earth seem our Father's temple,
Each loving life a psalm of gratitude.

"Then shall all shackles fall; the stormy clangor
Of wild war music o'er the earth shall cease;
Love shall tread out the baleful fire of anger,
And in its ashes plant the tree of peace."

As time went on and the contest with the pro-slavery party became more acute, there was much to try the faith of even so sturdy an optimist as Whittier. We must remember that among the literary leaders of New England he stood almost alone in his utter devotion to abolition. Men all about him, eminent in the pulpit and in other spheres of public life, held coldly aloof or openly antagonized the antislavery movement. On March 7, 1850, Webster made his memorable speech in the Senate, advocating compromise and defending the Fugitive Slave Law, a speech which brought untold surprise and grief to Whittier as well as to many others, and which called forth the poet's "Ichabod" in reply. The outlook was dark. The South was united and more determined than ever not to yield an inch but rather to increase its preserves. The North, from various motives, was largely apathetic. There was serious division even in the ranks of the abolitionists. Garrison led the extremists who were hurling their curses at the Constitution of the United States. Whittier, no less zealous, but wiser, lined up with the more temperate body, and thereby brought upon himself the bitter cen-

sure of some who had been his most ardent friends. But the whole strength of his young manhood, heart and soul, was dedicated to the task of freeing the slaves. It was indeed a consecration of all he had. High hopes and plans had been set aside. He was a man of one purpose.

In 1847 he became Corresponding Editor of the *National Era,* published in Washington, a strong antislavery paper, and this kept his pen busier than ever. It was shortly after this that he wrote to a friend: "What Providence has in store for me I know not, but my heart is full of thankfulness that I have been permitted to do something for the cause of humanity."

It was in these trying days, when the progress of the great reform seemed to be stayed or even turned backward, when his own efforts seemed to be well-nigh wasted, that he wrote one of his most characteristic and best-loved poems, "Seed-Time and Harvest." His childlike trust in God, the divine wisdom and goodness and might, never failed him. His Quaker upbringing, with its doctrine of the Inner Light, and its constant emphasis on the *nearness* of God, his indwelling presence in the human heart, brought to him a restfulness and contentment of soul which often found expression in his verse. He was doing his duty, scattering the seed; he was willing to abide God's

time for the harvest. As we read this poem—written about 1850—we are glad that Whittier had not many years to wait before he saw the full, rich harvest of his toil and sacrifice. The entire poem needs to be read to catch the full thought, though only the last five verses are included in the hymn as usually sung:

"As o'er his furrowed fields which lie
Beneath a coldly dropping sky,
Yet chill with winter's melted snow,
The husbandman goes forth to sow,

"Thus, Freedom, on the bitter blast
The ventures of thy seed we cast,
And trust to warmer sun and rain
To swell the germs and fill the grain.

"Who calls thy glorious service hard?
Who deems it not its own reward?
Who, for its trials, counts it less
A cause of praise and thankfulness?

"It may not be our lot to wield
The sickle in the ripened field;
Nor ours to hear, on summer eves,
The reaper's song among the sheaves.

"Yet where our duty's task is wrought
In unison with God's great thought,
The near and future blend in one,
And whatso'er is willed, is done.

"And ours the grateful service whence
Comes, day by day, the recompense;
The hope, the trust, the purpose stayed,
The fountain and the noonday shade.

"And were this life the utmost span,
The only end and aim of man,
Better the toil of fields like these
Than waking dream and slothful ease.

"But life, though falling like our grain,
Like that revives and springs again;
And, early called, how blest are they
Who wait in heaven, their harvest day!"

William McKinley was very fond of church hymns and always joined heartily in their singing. This hymn by Whittier was one of his favorites, and at his request it was sung at the First Methodist Episcopal Church of Canton, Ohio, where he was a member, on the Sunday morning before he started for his inauguration at Washington.

Whittier rarely wrote a poem intending that it should be sung. The Quakers never sang in their meetings, and he scarcely knew what congregational singing was. "I am really not a hymn writer," he once said of himself, "for the good reason that I know nothing of music. Only a very few of my pieces were written for singing. A good hymn is the best use to which poetry can be devoted, but I do not claim that I have succeeded in composing one." But whether he knew anything about music or not, he had a musical soul. His poems are full of the sweetest melody, and fully seventy-five hymns now in use

bear his authorship. In the collection of sixty-six hymns prepared for the Congress of Religions at Chicago, in 1893, nine were by Whittier, a larger number than from anyone else, and compilers of hymnals are turning more and more to his poems for material to enrich their books.

His two noble poems, "Our Master" and "The Eternal Goodness," each of them a revelation of the poet's deepest experience and soul-yearning, have yielded a number of hymns which are sung throughout the English-speaking world. They are composed of selected stanzas somewhat differently arranged according to the taste of the individual compiler.

There has been much discussion as to whether Whittier was strictly orthodox in his beliefs concerning Jesus Christ. Unitarian writers have insisted that he belonged to their fold, and they have certainly made more extensive use of his hymns than any other denomination. But "Our Master," and other poems, such as "The Crucifixion," leave no doubt in our minds as to the adequate place which "Our Friend, our Brother, and our Lord" had in the belief of the Quaker poet. Indeed, the faith in which he had been reared, with its steadfast insistence on the indwelling of the Spirit divine, seemed to bring the Christ peculiarly near to him. This was one reason why outward signs and symbols, even the

observance of Christmas, seemed to the Quakers so needless. The Lord Christ is neither in "the heavenly steeps" nor in "the lowest deeps"; he is within our hearts.

"Nor holy bread, nor blood of grape,"
The "lineaments restore."

"In vain shall waves of incense drift
The vaulted nave around,
In vain the minster turret lift
Its brazen weights of sound.

"The heart must ring thy Christmas bells,
Thy inward altars raise;
Its faith and hope thy canticles
And its obedience praise!"

Our church hymnody is permanently enriched through a poem like this. It has the universal appeal:

"O Lord and Master of us all!
Whate'er our name or sign,
We own thy sway, we hear thy call,
We test our lives by thine."

John Bright was a great admirer of Whittier's poems. After reading "The Eternal Goodness," he wrote: "It is worth a crowd of sermons which are spoken from the pulpit of our sects and churches, which I do not wish to undervalue." In the tender pathos of its appeal, a human heart to human hearts, it has no equal in anything that Whittier ever wrote, and it is not surprising that many of its stanzas have a treasured place in our

standard hymn books. Though born and reared a Quaker, Whittier necessarily came into close contact with the old Puritan theology which had held New England in its stern grip for so many years. Needless to say there were some features of that theology from which he shrank in horror. He denied that he was a Universalist, for he did not *know,* but he had very strong *hope* that all men would be saved. He had expressed this in earlier poems, and in reply to the criticism that followed, he wrote "The Eternal Goodness," explaining his thought more fully. An unconquerable belief in the goodness of God, the fruit of the love of God, was the heart and soul of Whittier's religion. It never failed him. However dark and evil the times, his faith was serene.

"I see the wrong that round me lies
I feel the guilt within;
I hear, with groan and travail-cries,
The world confess its sin.

"Yet, in the maddening maze of things,
And tossed by storm and flood,
To one fixed trust my spirit clings;
I know that God is good!"

Because of this faith, he dared hope and pray that in God's long years, "life's broken circle" would be made whole.

With "household voices gone" and "vanished smiles," and with his own face turned toward that

unknown future of "marvel or surprise," it was this same faith that inspired him to sing:

"I know not where His islands lift
Their fronded palms in air;
I only know I cannot drift
Beyond his love and care."

His old age was sunny because his trust in the goodness of God and all that it meant had increased with the passage of the years. His faith was triumphant. In 1881 he wrote to a friend: "The world is growing better; the Lord reigns; our old planet is wheeling slowly into fuller light. I despair of nothing good. All will come in due time that is really needed. All that we have to do is to work—and wait."

The ritual of the churches never appealed to Whittier. With his simple Quaker taste and his reliance on the Inner Light, he had no sympathy with form and ceremony. He knew, as we all know, that too often sign and symbol take the place of reality, and that in the most elaborate service the spirit of true worship may be utterly absent. Some of his most earnest and effective poems were pleas for simplicity in worship, a return to the primitive and soulful manner of approach to God. From the poem entitled "The Brewing of Soma," is taken one of our most beautiful hymns, with this thought running through it. Soma, in Hindu mythology, was the Indian Bac-

chus, the god personifying the soma plant from which an intoxicating milky juice was squeezed. This juice was supposed to give health and long life, and it was prepared with ceremonial care. The brewing and drinking were accompanied by boisterous antics in honor of Soma. The poet writes:

> . . . "the past comes round again,
> And new doth old fulfil;
> In sensual transports wild as vain
> We brew in many a Christian fane
> The heathen Soma still!
>
> "Dear Lord and Father of mankind,
> Forgive our foolish ways!
> Reclothe us in our rightful mind,
> In purer lives thy service find,
> In deeper reverence, praise.
>
> "In simple trust like theirs who heard
> Beside the Syrian sea
> The gracious calling of the Lord,
> Let us, like them, without a word,
> Rise up and follow thee.
>
> "O Sabbath rest by Galilee!
> O calm of hills above,
> Where Jesus knelt to share with thee
> The silence of eternity
> Interpreted by love!
>
> "Drop thy still dews of quietness,
> Till all our strivings cease;
> Take from our souls the strain and stress,
> And let our ordered lives confess
> The beauty of thy peace.

"Breathe through the heats of our desire
Thy coolness and thy balm;
Let sense be dumb, let flesh retire;
Speak through the earthquake, wind, and fire,
O still, small voice of calm!"

Whittier's writings, both poems and letters, are full of his belief in a future life. No American poet is quoted as often on immortality as he, none has given such comfort to bereaved hearts. And yet with him as with us all, it was a matter of faith rather than of reasoning. Said he, "There is no great use in arguing the question of immortality. One must feel its truth. You cannot climb into heaven on a syllogism." Now and again he had his doubts and fears. He longed for "assurance doubly sure." As life crept on, and he began to feel "the dark and chill of the evening shadows rest upon him," he exclaimed, "The awful mysteries of life and nature sometimes almost overwhelm me. 'What, Where, Whither?' These questions sometimes hold me breathless." When he loosened his grasp on faith and tried to gain intellectual certainty, he gave up in despair. His heart whispered "That Life is ever Lord of Death." His head replied, "Prove it!" And he could not. But faith triumphed over every doubt and fear. As he lay dying he whispered, "Love—love to all the world." And when the final moment approached,

one of the watchers at his bedside, with tearful voice, recited his poem, "At Last," which he wrote in old age, and which has so fittingly found a place in our hymnody:

"When on my day of life the night is falling,
And, in the winds from unsunned spaces blown,
I hear far voices out of darkness calling
My feet to paths unknown;

"Thou, who hast made my home of life so pleasant,
Leave not its tenant when its walls decay;
O Love Divine, O Helper ever present,
Be thou my strength and stay!

"Be near me when all else is from me drifting;
Earth, sky, home's pictures, days of shade and shine,
And kindly faces to my own uplifting
The love which answers mine.

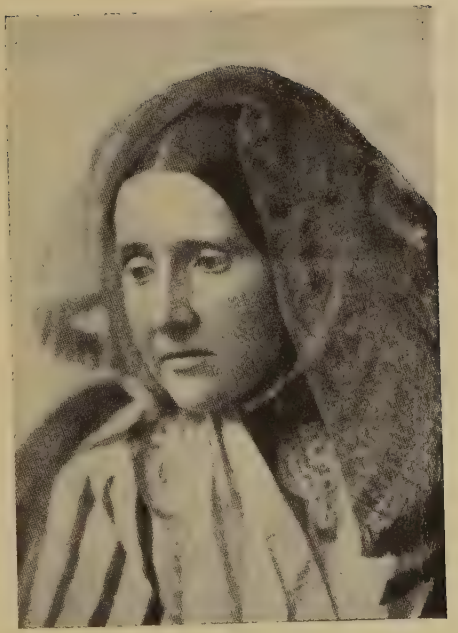
"I have but thee, my Father! let thy Spirit
Be with me then to comfort and uphold;
No gate of pearl, no branch of palm I merit,
Nor street of shining gold.

"Suffice it if—my good and ill unreckoned,
And both forgiven through thy abounding grace—
I find myself by hands familiar beckoned
Unto my fitting place,—

"Some humble door among thy many mansions,
Some sheltering shade where sin and striving cease,
And flows forever through heaven's green expansions
The river of thy peace.

"There, from the music round about me stealing,
I fain would learn the new and holy song,
And find at last, beneath thy trees of healing,
The life for which I long."

HARRIET BEECHER STOWE



JULIA WARD HOWE

CHAPTER XV

MRS. STOWE, MRS. HOWE

Harriet Beecher Stowe

1812–1896

In her *Days with Mrs. Stowe,* Mrs. Fields tells us that in the twilight, one evening, late in life, Mrs. Stowe "was accosted in the garden of her country retreat, by a good old retired sea captain, who was her neighbor for the time. 'When I was younger,' said he, respectfully, holding his hat in his hand while he spoke, 'I read with a great deal of satisfaction and instruction *Uncle Tom's Cabin.* The story impressed me very much, and I am happy to shake hands with you, Mrs. Stowe, who wrote it.' 'I did not write it,' answered the white-haired old lady, gently, as she shook the captain's hand. 'You didn't?' he ejaculated in amazement. 'Why, who did, then?' 'God wrote it,' she replied simply. 'I simply did his dictation.' 'Amen!' said the captain, reverently, as he walked thoughtfully away." This expressed the heart of Mrs. Stowe. Whether her message was in story or tract or hymn, she felt that God was speaking through her, and she could say, "Thus saith the Lord."

It is doubtful if America has produced a family quite equal to the group that gathered about Lyman Beecher in the old parsonage at Litchfield, Connecticut. The first wife died when Harriet was less than four and Henry Ward was a baby. It was the dying prayer of this devoted mother that God would call all six of her boys into the ministry, and the prayer was answered. All the world knows, at least in part, what the Beecher family contributed, through voice and pen, to the uplift of humanity.

Harriet could never forget the day when she definitely committed her life to Jesus Christ. It was a Sunday during the summer when she was fourteen. That morning her father preached a sermon of such tender and appealing force that it went straight to the girl's heart, and she determined then and there to become a Christian. At the moment she made the inner vow, her "whole soul was illumined with joy," and as she walked home it seemed to her "as if Nature herself were hushing her breath to hear the music of heaven." "As soon as father came home and was seated in his study, I went up to him and fell in his arms, saying, 'Father, I have given myself to Jesus, and he has taken me.' I never shall forget the expression of his face as he looked down into my earnest, childish eyes; it was so sweet, so gentle, and like sunlight breaking out upon a land-

scape. 'Is it so?' he said, holding me silently to his heart, as I felt the hot tears fall on my head. 'Then has a new flower blossomed in the kingdom this day.' " There were hours of spiritual depression in the after years, but that early experience was never lost, and as time went on Mrs. Stowe developed a rarely beautiful and mature Christian character.

Her hymns touch the lowest deeps of the soul-life. In the summer of 1853 she said to a friend who was visiting at the home, that "she often arose in the morning at half-past four and went out to enjoy the birds and the dawn, and she challenged him to join her. The next morning they went out, and in that rare, sweet atmosphere they talked and were silent together. And she read to him some verses which she had written at such an hour." They were the verses of the hymn which since then has been so often sung and which has brought comfort and peace to so many troubled hearts:

"Still, still with thee, when purple morning breaketh,
When the bird waketh, and the shadows flee;
Fairer than morning, lovelier than daylight,
Dawns the sweet consciousness, I am with thee.

"Alone with thee, amid the mystic shadows,
The solemn hush of nature newly born;
Alone with thee in breathless adoration,
In the calm dew and freshness of the morn.

"As in the dawning o'er the waveless ocean,
The image of the morning-star doth rest,
So in this stillness, thou beholdest only
Thine image in the waters of my breast.

"Still, still with thee! As to each newborn morning
A fresh and solemn splendor still is given,
So does this blessed consciousness awaking,
Breathe each day nearness unto thee and heaven.

"When sinks the soul, subdued by toil, to slumber,
Its closing eyes look up to thee in prayer;
Sweet the repose beneath thy wings o'ershading,
But sweeter still, to wake and find thee there.

"So shall it be at last, in that bright morning,
When the soul waketh, and life's shadows flee;
O in that hour, fairer than daylight dawning,
Shall rise the glorious thought—I am with thee."

From the day that the fourteen-year-old girl cried, "Father, I have given myself to Jesus," on to the very end, the Lord Christ was the center of her life. In old age we find her saying, "This winter I study nothing but Christ's life. . . . It keeps my mind steady, and helps me to bear the languor and pain." She wrote to a friend, "I have sometimes had in my sleep strange perceptions of a vivid spiritual life near to and with Christ. . . . The inconceivable loveliness of Christ! . . . I was saying as I awoke:

"'Tis joy enough, my all in all,
At thy dear feet to lie.
Thou wilt not let me lower fall,
And none can higher fly.'

"This was but a glimpse; but it has left a strange sweetness in my mind." One day, while still a comparatively young woman, she was quietly meditating on the words of Jesus, "Abide in me, and I in you"; and then it was that she wrote the lines of this hymn which we quote in part; it is her soul's response to the Master's appeal:

"That mystic word of thine, O sovereign Lord,
Is all too pure, too high, too deep for me;
Weary of striving, and with longing faint,
I breathe it back again in *prayer* to thee.

"Abide in me, I pray, and I in thee!
From this good hour, O, leave me nevermore!
Then shall the discord cease, the wound be healed,
The life-long bleeding of the soul be o'er.

"Abide in me; o'ershadow by thy love
Each half-formed purpose and dark thought of sin;
Quench, ere it rise, each selfish, low desire,
And keep my soul as thine, calm and divine.

"As some rare perfume, in a vase of clay
Pervades it with a fragrance not its own,
So, when thou dwellest in a mortal soul,
All heaven's own sweetness seems around it thrown."

Mrs. Stowe's life was by no means one of unbroken ease and quiet. There were many times of serious physical disability when her sufferings were intense. When she was twenty-one the

family broke away from their beloved New England connections and migrated to what was then the frontier town of Cincinnati. Years of patient struggling followed. Her husband, because of physical collapse, was obliged to spend fifteen months alone in the east. During his absence a terrible scourge of cholera visited Cincinnati, and the youngest child died: "My Charley—my beautiful, gladsome baby, so loving, so sweet, so full of life and hope and strength," as the stricken mother wrote to the equally stricken father. And yet amid all her troubles her faith remained buoyant, and she could say, "There is not one sorrow that I have had that I would part with—nay, I bear with joy all that falls on my heart from day to day. I say 'Welcome, cross of Christ!' "

But a heavier blow that she knew not of was impending. In the summer of 1857 her eldest son, Henry, the hope and pride of her heart, a student at Dartmouth, was drowned in the Connecticut River. It was the crushing grief of her whole life. The letters that she wrote after the event but feebly expressed an anguish of soul which was far too deep for words. But a sorrow scarcely second to this came when another son was wounded in the head at the battle of Gettysburg. He did not die, but the brain was affected so that he was never himself again. It was a living sorrow. It is stimulating to one's own faith

and courage to find a fellow-soul, amid experiences like these, standing true and steadfast. Mrs. Stowe had entered the "secret place of the Most High," and it was this that enabled her to write that hymn entitled, "The Secret," which was often a consolation to her as it has been to others:

"When winds are raging o'er the upper ocean,
And billows wild contend with angry roar,
'Tis said, far down, beneath the wild commotion,
That peaceful stillness reigneth evermore.

"Far, far beneath, the noise of tempests dieth,
And silver waves chime ever peacefully;
And no rude storm, how fierce soe'er it flieth,
Disturbs the Sabbath of that deeper sea.

"So to the heart that knows thy love, O Purest!
There is a temple sacred evermore,
And all the babble of life's angry voices
Dies in hushed stillness at its sacred door.

"Far, far away, the roar of passion dieth,
And loving thoughts rise calm and peacefully;
And no rude storm, how fierce soe'er it flieth,
Disturbs that deeper rest, O Lord, in thee!

"O Rest of rests! O Peace serene, eternal!
Thou ever livest, and thou changest never;
And in the secret of thy presence dwelleth
Fullness of joy, forever and forever."

It was inevitable that one with such an experience should be eager to help others out of dark-

ness into light. Mrs. Stowe was a soul-winner of the best type. Elizabeth Stuart Phelps tells a beautiful story of her friend. A young man in whom Mrs. Stowe had long felt a deep and tender interest, had gone abroad to complete his studies at a German university. After a while intimations came that he was drifting into infidelity. This prospect filled her with grief and she determined to do her utmost to avert the calamity. She began writing; some of her letters were thirty pages in length. They were prepared with great care; she put into them the strongest arguments and appeals that reason and love could suggest. But apparently it was all in vain. "Then she laid aside her strong pen, and turned to her great faith. As the season of the sacred holiday approached, she shut herself into her room, secluding herself from all but God, and prayed as only such a believer—as only such a woman—may. . . . A few weeks after this, a letter reached her, saying only: 'At Christmas time a light came to me. I see things differently now. I see my way to accept the faith of my fathers; and the belief in Christianity which is everything to you, has become reasonable and possible to me at last.' "

Julia Ward Howe

1819–1910

"Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord;
He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored;
He hath loosed the fateful lightning of his terrible swift sword:
His truth is marching on.
Glory! glory! Hallelujah! His truth is marching on.

"I have seen him in the watch-fires of a hundred circling camps;
They have builded him an altar in the evening dews and damps;
I can read his righteous sentence by the dim and flaring lamps:
His day is marching on.

"I have read a fiery gospel writ in burnished rows of steel:
'As ye deal with my contemners, so with you my grace shall deal';
Let the Hero, born of woman, crush the serpent with his heel,
Since God is marching on.

"He has sounded forth the trumpet that shall never call retreat;
He is sifting out the hearts of men before his judgment-seat:
O be swift, my soul, to answer him! be jubilant, my feet!
Our God is marching on.

"In the beauty of the lilies Christ was born across the sea,
With a glory in his bosom that transfigures you and me:
As he died to make men holy, let us die to make men free,
While God is marching on."

"Mrs. Howe ought to die now, for she has done the best that she will ever do," remarked a friend on reading the newly written "Battle Hymn of the Republic." "I was not of this opinion," was the naïve comment of Mrs. Howe. But certain it is that long after the world has forgotten all else that she did during her long and brilliant career of ninety-one years, it will remember that she wrote one of the noblest—shall we say *the* noblest?—patriotic lyrics that was ever produced. And was not this a service to her country and to the world of the highest order?

She was born in New York City on May 27, 1819. She came of distinguished lineage, her immediate ancestors on both sides having been famous in Revolutionary annals. She had the blood of heroes in her veins. Her father, like the daughter after him, had the courage of his convictions. At a time when such reformers were at a discount, he was an ardent temperance advocate, and president of the first temperance society organized in this country.

Julia Ward was brought up in an atmosphere

of religious strictness. The family were Episcopalians, of the Evangelical, or Low Church, and so intense was the father's devotion to the teachings of Calvinism that he felt a positive anguish when his own father died, because the latter's orthodoxy at all of these points was not fully established. The awful majesty and severity of God, the utter depravity and worthlessness of man, "like the worms which in the dust must go," the final saving of a select few after a long and desperate experience, and the condemnation of the vast majority of mankind to endless burnings—these were the doctrines which Julia was taught and which she was expected to accept without hesitation or mental reservation, and it was against such doctrines that the girl's rising spirit of independence stubbornly revolted.

On her marriage to Dr. Howe and her removal to Boston she entered an entirely different atmosphere. She was now free; she moved among the leaders of the so-called "Liberal Faith." For a time she attended the preaching of Theodore Parker, afterward becoming a member of the Church of the Disciples, of which James Freeman Clarke was pastor. She belonged to the Radical Club and often listened to speakers of an anti-Christian type, and she was a keen student of the leading philosophical systems. During these years she might easily have drifted far-a-sea

in her religious beliefs. That she did not is a tribute to the depth and genuineness of her spiritual experience. She could say: "Nothing of what I had heard or read had shaken my faith in the leadership of Christ in the religion which makes each man the brother of all, and God the beneficent Father of each and all—the religion of humanity." Whenever a club speaker ventured to depreciate Christianity it pained her deeply, and when opportunity came she was quickly on her feet in protest. Through her whole life she retained her simple girlhood faith in the might of Divine Providence. She believed implicitly in the presence of God and in his ruling and overruling power among men. All this appears very clearly in her immortal Battle Hymn.

During her young womanhood the question of slavery was every day looming bigger. While in a general way she sympathized with the black race, she regarded with ill-concealed suspicion the Abolitionists, and it was not till she came into personal contact with William Lloyd Garrison and other leaders that she found occasion to change her opinions. From that time on she was heart and soul with the foes of slavery. The militant blood of her sires leaped in her veins, and when Wendell Phillips was threatened by mobs she sent word to him that she would feel proud to serve with others as a bodyguard.

One day in the fifties her husband spoke to her in a mysterious way of "a very remarkable man, of whom, he said, I should be sure to hear sooner or later," but no name was mentioned. A year or so after he said to her, "Do you remember that man of whom I spoke to you—the one who wished to be a saviour for the Negro race? . . . That man will call here this afternoon. You will receive him. His name is John Brown." He came and she had a brief visit with him. Whatever Dr. and Mrs. Howe may have thought of John Brown's methods they were in warm sympathy with his general purpose. On the day of his execution a special service was held in the Church of the Disciples, with a very tender and appropriate sermon by Dr. Clarke.

Events hurried on; it was the fall of 1861. The war had been in progress for six months. Dr. Howe was a member of various commissions, doing his best to help forward the great cause. What could Mrs. Howe do? She had no son old enough to send to the front; her family cares demanded much of the time she would gladly have given to some form of public service. It was a matter of keen regret to her that her own contribution to the winning of the war should be so small.

That autumn, in company with her husband, her pastor, and Governor Andrews of Massachu-

setts, a close personal friend, she made her first visit to Washington. The city and its environs were crowded with Federal troops brought there for the defense of the nation's capital. One day there was a military review some distance from town, and Dr. and Mrs. Howe and their friends were invited to drive out and witness it. Suddenly a threatening move by the enemy brought the maneuvers to an abrupt end, and later the soldiers were ordered to their cantonment. As the visitors were slowly making their way back along the road congested with troops, they began to sing some of the army songs of the day. When they broke out with, "John Brown's body lies a-mouldering in the grave," the soldiers cheered them. "Mrs. Howe," said Dr. Clarke, "why do you not write some good words for that stirring tune?" The hour of her inspiration was at hand.

In her *Reminiscences* she tells us: "I went to bed that night as usual, and slept, according to my wont, quite soundly. I awoke in the gray of the morning twilight; and as I lay waiting for the dawn, the long lines of the desired poem began to twine themselves in my mind. Having thought out all the stanzas, I said to myself, 'I must get up and write these verses down, lest I fall asleep again and forget them.' So, with a sudden effort, I sprang out of bed, and found in the dimness an old stump of a pen which I re-

membered to have used the day before. I scrawled the verses almost without looking at the paper. I had learned to do this when, on previous occasions, attacks of versification had visited me in the night, and I feared to have recourse to a light lest I should wake the baby, who slept with me. . . . Having completed my writing, I returned to the bed and fell asleep, saying to myself, 'I like this better than most things I have written.' "

On going back to Boston, she showed the poem to her friend, Mr. James T. Fields, editor of the *Atlantic Monthly*. He accepted it and paid her five dollars for it. As yet it had no name, and he suggested "The Battle Hymn of the Republic." He saw that it had merit, but neither he nor Mrs. Howe dreamed of the future in store for it. The poem appeared the following February, 1862, and at once it began to attract attention.

Its immense popularity, however, was largely due to the use made of it by Chaplain C. C. McCabe, of the 122nd Ohio Volunteer Infantry. He read it in the *Atlantic*, and, as he wrote to Mrs. Howe, "I was so charmed with it that before I arose from my chair I committed it to memory." He was captured by the Confederates on June 16, 1863, and sent to Libby Prison, where a large number of Federal prisoners, chiefly officers, were crowded together. He had

been there about two weeks, when one evening word came in that the Union forces had suffered a terrible defeat. The men were plunged into gloom, but it was not for long. A Negro who helped to bring them their food, whispered to a little group that the news was false; there had been a great battle and the Federals had won. In a moment the whole crowd were on their feet cheering wildly. Then Chaplain McCabe, with his wonderful baritone voice began to sing: "Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord," and the men fairly shouted the chorus, "Glory! glory! Hallelujah!" It was the victory of Gettysburg.

After the Chaplain's release he returned to Washington and was present at a great meeting of the Christian Commission. President Lincoln was there, and notable speakers took part. Presently Chaplain McCabe was asked to describe his recent experiences in Richmond. He told of that evening when the false and the true news came, and of how they sang, and when the audience called for the song he gave them the Battle Hymn. As each verse rolled out the excitement increased, and when he was done there was a tumult of applause. Mr. Lincoln, with the tears streaming down his face, cried, "Sing it again," and again it was sung. Henceforth it was a national hymn. At both Chicago and Springfield

it was sung by Chaplain McCabe in connection with the obsequies of President Lincoln. And it was eminently fitting that when the Bishop himself was laid to rest the friends who gathered at his graveside should sing this same hymn which he loved so well and which he had done so much to glorify.

During all the intervening years the Battle Hymn—"the terrible Battle Hymn of the Republic," as Rudyard Kipling calls it—has been an immense favorite throughout America, and since the spring of 1917, when our country entered the great war, it has become almost as famous abroad, especially in England, as at home. Our soldiers sang it on the fields of France with a fervor they had never known before. Again and again the walls of stately English cathedrals echoed to its jubilant notes, and the followers of the Union Jack learned to ring out its "Glory! glory! Hallelujah!" with as much gusto as the most patriotic American. Indeed the war has called striking attention to the fact that this noble lyric is admirably suited to world-wide use. It is almost as well fitted to be the Battle Hymn of all nations as of our own land. While the great struggle was on, its militant lines were being constantly quoted in one connection or another. On that memorable Sunday, shortly before the end came, when the Americans and

Australians broke the Hindenburg line above St. Quentin, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle was a spectator of the victorious drive. That evening he began his cabled report to the American Press, thus:

"Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord,
He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored."

"The grand, sonorous, mystical lines of Julia Ward Howe rang in my head, as I found myself one of the actual witnesses of this, one of the historical episodes of the greatest of wars." Without a doubt the hymn has found a new and abiding place in the mind and heart of the world.

The tune is an old camp meeting melody slightly altered, in use long before our Civil War. It has been often criticised, and on one occasion during the recent war, when the hymn was being sung in Saint Paul's Cathedral, London, the organist refused to play the refrain, to the surprise and disappointment of the crowd of Americans present. Conservative musicians have urged that a tune of greater dignity be used. But the present tune, whatever its technical defects, has a certain military swing and charm of melody which have given it a hold on the popular taste which is not likely to be disturbed.

MRS. STOWE, MRS. HOWE

On Wednesday, October 5, 1910, Mrs. Howe, at the age of ninety-one, visited Smith College to receive the degree of Doctor of Laws. Her daughter describes the scene: "It was a day of perfect autumn beauty. She was early dressed in her white dress, with the college gown of rich black silk over it, the mortar-board covering in like manner her white lace cap. Thus arrayed, a wheeled chair conveyed her to the great hall, already packed with visitors and graduates. . . . Opposite the platform, as if hung in air, a curving gallery was filled with white-clad girls, some two thousand of them; as she entered they rose like a flock of doves, and with them the whole audience. They rose once more when her name was called . . . and as she came forward, the organ pealed, and the great chorus of fresh young voices broke out with 'Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord.' It was the last time." Twelve days later the Lord came, and her eyes in very truth beheld his glory. On the Centennial of her birth, when speaking of her immortal lyric, that eminent British editor, Sir W. Robertson Nicoll, said, "It was for this end, for the writing of this hymn, that Julia Ward Howe was born into the world."

CHAPTER XVI

PALMER, SMITH

Ray Palmer
1808–1887

Not far from Sakonnet Point, where southeastern Rhode Island thrusts itself out into the Atlantic Ocean, lies the quiet hamlet of Little Compton. The first settlers arrived there from the north, well back in the seventeenth century. Off a bit from the road stands an old house, of the pioneer days but sturdy as ever; with a broad shingled roof sloping toward the one-storied front, trellised windows, and huge square chimney rising from the center of the peak.

Here Ray Palmer was born, on November 12, 1808. No one would challenge the worth of his pedigree. He was a descendant of William Palmer, who came over to Plymouth in the ship "Fortune" in 1621, and also of John and Priscilla Alden, through their daughter Elizabeth. Not far from Ray's birthplace stands the Betty Alden house, built in 1680. Judge Palmer, the boy's father, gave him a home-education till he was thirteen, and then the lad started out on his own resources. He clerked in a Boston drygoods store for two years. Providentially he was

RAY PALMER

SAMUEL FRANCIS SMITH

led to attend the Park Street Congregational Church, where Rev. Sereno E. Dwight was pastor, and where he was happily converted. Dr. Dwight saw what a bright mind the boy had and urged him to go to school, and as soon as possible a place was opened for him at the Phillips Andover Academy. Graduating from there he entered Yale in 1826, completing the course four years later.

He at once went to New York and accepted a teaching position in a school for young ladies which stood in the then fashionable quarter of Fulton Street, behind Saint Paul's Church. From there he returned to New Haven, where he taught in a Female Seminary. In the meantime he had been diligently studying theology, and in 1835 he was ordained and became pastor in Bath, Maine. In thirty years he held but two pulpits—fifteen years in each—the one in Bath and the other in Albany, New York. Then he moved to New York City once more, to become Corresponding Secretary of the American Congregational Union, and during the next twelve years he assisted in the erection of six hundred church buildings. In 1878, due to failing health, he gave up this laborious work, and retired to Newark, New Jersey. But he continued to write, and to render pastoral service as his strength permitted. He died on March 29, 1887.

While Ray Palmer was eminently useful as a pastor, a preacher, and a secretary, his largest and most enduring contribution to the Kingdom was in the writing of hymns. Nor is it a fact of small interest that of the many lyrics which came from his pen the first was the best. Dr. Cuyler once said of "My faith looks up to thee," that it was "by far the most precious contribution which American genius has yet made to the hymnology of the Christian Church." With but few dissenting voices this has been the verdict among hymn-lovers not only in this country but the world over.

It was written when the author was only twenty-two, and he has given us an interesting account of how he came to do it. "Immediately after graduating at Yale College, in September, 1830, the writer went to the City of New York to spend a year in teaching in a select school for young ladies. This private institution, which was patronized by the best class of families, was under the direction of an excellent Christian lady connected with Saint George's Church. . . . The writer resided in the family of the lady who kept the school, and it was there that the hymn was written. It had no external occasion whatever. Having been accustomed from childhood, through an inherited propensity perhaps, to the occasional expression of what his heart felt, in

the form of verse, it was in accordance with this habit, and in an hour when Christ, in the riches of his grace and love, was so vividly apprehended as to fill the soul with deep emotion, that the lines were composed. There was not the slightest thought of writing for another eye, least of all writing a hymn for Christian worship. Away from outward excitement, in the quiet of his chamber, and with a deep consciousness of his own needs, the writer transferred as faithfully as he could to paper what at the time was passing within him. Six stanzas were composed and imperfectly written, first on a loose sheet, and then accurately copied into a small morocco-covered book, which for such purposes the author was accustomed to carry in his pocket. This first complete copy is still [1875] preserved. It is well remembered that when writing the last line, 'A ransomed soul,' the thought that the whole work of redemption and salvation was involved in those words, and suggested the theme of eternal praises, moved the writer to a degree of emotion that brought abundant tears."

"A year or two after the hymn was written, and when no one, so far as can be recollected, had ever seen it, Dr. Lowell Mason met the author in the street in Boston, and requested him to furnish some hymns for a *Hymn and Tune Book,* which, in connection with Dr. Hastings of

New York, he was about to publish. The little book containing the hymn was shown him, and he asked for a copy. We stepped into a store together, and a copy was made and given to him, which, without much notice, he put in his pocket. On sitting down at home and looking it over, he became so much interested in it that he wrote for it the tune 'Olivet,' in which it has almost universally been sung. Two or three days afterward we met again in the street, when, scarcely waiting to salute the writer, he earnestly exclaimed: 'Mr. Palmer, you may live many years and do many good things, but I think you will be best known to posterity as the author of "My faith looks up to Thee!" ' "

This matchless lyric cannot be quoted too often:

"My faith looks up to thee,
Thou Lamb of Calvary,
Saviour divine!
Now hear me while I pray,
Take all my guilt away,
O let me from this day
Be wholly thine!

"May thy rich grace impart
Strength to my fainting heart,
My zeal inspire;
As thou hast died for me,
O may my love to thee
Pure, warm, and changeless be,
A living fire.

My faith looks up to Thee,
Thou Lamb of Calvary,
Saviour Divine;
Now hear me while I pray;
Take all my guilt away,
O let me from this day
Be wholly Thine.

May thy rich grace impart
Strength to my fainting heart;
My zeal inspire.
As thou hast died for me,
O may my love to Thee,
Pure, warm, & changeless be,
A living fire.

1732.

"While life's dark maze I tread,
And griefs around me spread,
Be thou my guide;
Bid darkness turn to day,
Wipe sorrow's tears away,
Nor let me ever stray
From thee aside.

"When ends life's transient dream,
When death's cold, sullen stream
Shall o'er me roll;
Blest Saviour, then, in love,
Fear and distrust remove;
O bear me safe above,
A ransomed soul."

After its first appearance, in *Spiritual Songs,* in 1832, it quickly came into use in America; it also soon found its way into English and Scotch hymnals. No lyric of American origin has been translated into so many languages, none has been included in so many hymn books and so widely sung, none has evoked such words of praise and appreciation. It is not an accident that it was written in the first person singular. It was the prayer of one who had entered "the secret place of the Most High," the outpouring of a soul to the Lamb of God. We are thankful that this sublime effusion has come into our possession, but had it been intended for the public eye it could never have been written.

Truly could the author sing of "My Faith,"

for it was *his,* a simple, childlike trust in God, which never failed him to the end of his days. He had what Jonathan Edwards has called "a calm rapture." Dr. William M. Taylor, his intimate friend, has said: "In all my intercourse with him, I cannot recall an occasion on which I found him depressed. He had his trials, some of them sore and heavy, but they did not destroy his happiness. And this cheerfulness rooted in his faith. He used to say, 'We must not carry burdens.' God was his great burden-bearer, and so the peace of God filled his heart."

We notice in this general connection a striking parallelism: Two young men, Ray Palmer and Samuel F. Smith, born in the same year; both graduate from college; both enter the Christian ministry; each writes his most famous hymn at the beginning of his career; both hymns, "My faith looks up to Thee" and "My country, 'tis of thee," written in the same meter, are given to the world in the same year, 1832; both men live to a ripe age, and they are recognized to-day as probably the two greatest hymnists that America has produced.

Several of Dr. Palmer's best hymns are translations from Latin originals, but so admirably has the work been done that every line bears the impress of the rich personality of the translator. In the hymn beginning,

"Jesus, thou Joy of loving hearts!
Thou Fount of life! thou Light of men!
From the best bliss that earth imparts,
We turn unfilled to thee again,"

we have an English rendering of several stanzas of the famous hymn, "Jesu, dulcis memoria," written by Saint Bernard of Clairvaux in the twelfth century. These lines beautifully reveal the spirit of Dr. Palmer. His whole life, his thinking, his preaching, his writing, his soul's affections, centered in Christ, who to him was very God. This was why, all through his ministry, he made so much of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. It held a large place in his own spiritual experience and he constantly magnified it when dealing with others. While pastor in Albany, in speaking of Jesus, he said: "At the sacramental table I may meet him, if my heart is ready to receive so divine a guest. When the cares and the business of life have hurried me hither and thither with no little distraction of mind, I love to come back again, and sit down before the cross, and gaze on the blessed Sufferer with silent, tender memories. It is like coming once more into the sunshine after long walking through gloom and mist." Some of his most beautiful and best loved hymns were composed for use at the communion season. One in particular, though from the Latin of an earlier

period, shows the spirit and the genius of the translator:

"O Bread to pilgrims given,
O Food that angels eat,
O Manna sent from heaven,
For heaven-born natures meet!
Give us, for thee long pining,
To eat till richly filled;
Till, earth's delights resigning,
Our every wish is stilled.

"O Fount of love redeeming,
Forth from the Saviour's heart
In mercy purely streaming,
A Fount of life thou art:
O let us, freely tasting,
Our burning thirst assuage;
Thy sweetness, never wasting,
Avails from age to age.

"Jesus, this feast receiving,
We thee unseen adore;
Thy faithful word believing,
We take, and doubt no more:
Give us, thou True and Loving,
On earth to live in thee;
Then, death the veil removing,
Thy glorious face to see."

Dr. Palmer used to say that he could never compose a hymn to order; he must write as the Spirit moved him. The making of hymns was more than a mere literary task; it was a definite part of the King's business. This was why he

uniformly declined any remuneration for his hymns; the product of divine inspiration might be given away but never sold. One hard and fast condition, however, accompanied all such gifts—what he had written he had written, there must be no tampering with the text, for "this," he solemnly declared, he could not "but feel to be an immorality which no Christian man should be willing to commit." We are glad that he made the condition. Think of meddling with such lines as these, translated from a mediæval hymn!

"Come, Holy Ghost, in love
Shed on us from above
Thine own bright ray!
Divinely good thou art;
Thy sacred gifts impart
To gladden each sad heart:
O come to-day!"

When Ray Palmer was a young man and the sterner theology of the fathers was still current, a multitude of hymns of the "alarming" type, lurid in thought and language, were being sung and were in high repute. Dr. Palmer never wrote anything of this kind, and yet he was a tireless and successful winner of souls. His poetical appeals lost nothing in fervor because of their sweet persuasiveness; they were not lacking in solemn intensity, but they drew "with cords of a man, with bands of love." While pastor in Al-

bany he wrote a hymn with the simple title, "Take Me," based on the Parable of the Prodigal Son. It met with immediate favor, and has been widely used ever since. The author received many messages of gratitude from those who had been blessed by it.

"Take me, O my Father, take me;
Take me, save me, through thy Son;
That which thou wouldst have me, make me,
Let thy will in me be done.
Long from thee my footsteps straying,
Thorny proved the way I trod;
Weary come I now, and praying,
Take me to thy love, my God.

"Fruitless years with grief recalling,
Humbly I confess my sin;
At thy feet, O Father, falling,
To thy household take me in.
Freely now to thee I proffer
This relenting heart of mine;
Freely life and soul I offer,
Gift unworthy love like thine.

"Once the world's Redeemer, dying,
Bore our sins upon the tree;
On that sacrifice relying,
Now I look in hope to thee:
Father, take me; all forgiving,
Fold me to thy loving breast;
In thy love forever living
I must be forever blest."

Reference has already been made to Dr. Palmer's passionate devotion to the Master. It is

seen in one of the noblest hymns he ever composed, indeed, the one that he himself preferred to all others. It was written during his Albany pastorate and was suggested by the words of Peter, "Jesus Christ, whom having not seen ye love." It was the product of a sudden impulse. He was preparing a sermon on Christ, his favorite theme. Needing a certain book, he turned to the case and on opening the door, to his surprise, the first thing that his eye fell upon was the desired volume. Instantly the thought flashed through his mind that thus the face of Jesus would some day be unveiled to him. His feeling was so intense that he could think of nothing else. For the time the sermon was forgotten, and with throbbing heart, under the inspiration of an exultant hope, he wrote these rarely beautiful stanzas:

"Jesus, these eyes have never seen
That radiant form of thine;
The veil of sense hangs dark between
Thy blessed face and mine.

"I see thee not, I hear thee not,
Yet art thou oft with me;
And earth hath ne'er so dear a spot
As where I meet with thee.

"Like some bright dream that comes unsought,
When slumbers o'er me roll,
Thine image ever fills my thought,
And charms my ravished soul.

"Yet though I have not seen, and still
Must rest in faith alone;
I love thee, dearest Lord, and will,
Unseen, but not unknown.

"When death these mortal eyes shall seal,
And still this throbbing heart,
The rending veil shall thee reveal,
All glorious as thou art."

In spite of failing health, Dr. Palmer's declining years were full of joy and contentment. His was a serene and lovable old age. He was widely known and everywhere men held him in honor and affection. He was the soul of modesty. Dr. Taylor says that "he never thrust himself forward and when others tried to do that for him, he pulled back with all his might. It was almost amusing to see how, while he was sitting behind others on a platform, and the speaker quoted or referred to one of his hymns, making some grateful or pleasant remark about its author, he would blush like a schoolgirl, and hide his face with his uplifted hand." Wherever he went he was a welcome visitor. Several times he preached for Dr. Cuyler, in the Lafayette Avenue Presbyterian Church, Brooklyn. "He was once with us on a sacramental Sabbath. While the deacons were passing the sacred elements among the congregation the dear old man broke out in a tremulous voice and sang his own heavenly lines:

" 'My faith looks up to thee,
Thou Lamb of Calvary,
Saviour divine.'

It was like listening to a rehearsal for the celestial choir, and the whole assembly was most deeply moved."

His fondness for hymns, especially those which sang of Jesus, grew to the very end of his life. As death drew near, he lay with his eyes closed, apparently unconscious. Presently the loving watchers at the bedside noticed that his lips were moving. Bending low to catch the faintest utterance, they heard him in broken, almost inarticulate syllables, repeating those blessed lines:

"When death these mortal eyes shall seal,
And still this throbbing heart,
The rending veil shall thee reveal,
All glorious as thou art."

The words died away, unfinished, as he beheld his Master, face to face.

Samuel Francis Smith
1808–1895

"And there's a nice youngster of excellent pith—
Fate tried to conceal him by naming him Smith;
But he shouted a song for the brave and the free—
Just read on his medal, 'my country,' 'of thee'!"

To have composed the national hymn for a great people is such an extraordinary achieve-

ment that no wonder it overshadows all else that the author did. Everybody knows that Samuel F. Smith wrote "My country, 'tis of thee," but they do not all know that he contributed nearly one hundred and fifty other poems to American hymnody, and that some of these are in world-wide use.

He began life in a musical atmosphere. "I count it to have been a happy lot," he once said, "that I was born under the sound of the Old North Church chimes, in Boston." And he goes on to tell us that "a strong poetical bias" took hold of him when a boy of eight years. "An 'Elegy on a Cat,' then written, disappeared long since, as well as the cat," but four years later he wrote a poem that was published. During the schooldays that followed, his poetical productions brought him frequent honors.

It is interesting to remember that his two best-known hymns, "My country, 'tis of thee," and "The morning light is breaking," were both written when he was only twenty-four years of age. It was in the winter of 1832, while Mr. Smith was a student at the Andover Theological Seminary. His friend, Lowell Mason, was busily engaged at the time in an effort to improve the choral music in the Boston churches, and in order to raise up a body of trained singers he was conducting a Saturday afternoon singing school for

children. He had just received a collection of song books from Europe, but being in a tongue which he did not understand, he passed them on to Mr. Smith, with the request that he examine them, and if he found any songs suited to children, that he render them into English; "or," said Mr. Mason, "if you prefer, compose hymns or songs of your own, of the same meter and accent, so that I can use them."

"One dismal day in February," so Dr. Smith used to tell the story, "about half an hour before sunset, I was turning over the leaves of one of the music books when my eye rested on the tune which is now known as 'America.' I liked the spirited movement of it, not knowing it, at that time, to be 'God save the King.' I glanced at the words and saw that they were patriotic, and instantly felt the impulse to write a patriotic hymn of my own, adapted to the tune. Picking up a scrap of waste paper which lay near me, I wrote at once, probably within half an hour, the hymn 'America' as it is now known everywhere. The whole hymn stands to-day as it stood on the bit of waste paper, five or six inches long and two and a half wide. I gave the song soon afterward to Mr. Mason, together with others, and thought no more of it. I was surprised on the following Fourth of July to find that Mr. Mason had brought it out at a children's celebration of

the day, in a crowded assembly in Park Street Church in Boston. It was sung with enthusiasm. Through the efforts of Mr. Mason, singing was introduced into the Boston public schools; and, with the introduction of singing, came naturally the use of this hymn. . . . I began very soon to hear of the hymn as being sung in numerous schools, at patriotic gatherings, at picnics, from Maine to Texas. The people took it into their hearts. It found a place in the hymn books of the various denominations. The scenes connected with the Civil War called it into universal requisition."

Late in life Dr. Smith said, in reply to an inquiry: "I have heard 'America' sung half way round the world. I have heard it on the Atlantic Ocean, on the Baltic Sea, and on the Mediterranean; in London, Liverpool, Stockholm, Copenhagen, Paris, Rome, Naples, in the baths at Pompeii, in Athens, Calcutta, and Rangoon. On the earth I have heard it on Pike's Peak, and under the earth in the caverns at Manitou, Colorado, where it was played on the stalactites." No tributes to the author of "America" were more wholesouled than those from Oliver Wendell Holmes. As is well known, the two men were both members of the famous Harvard Class of 1829, and the familiar lines at the head of this chapter, from the class poem which Holmes read

at the thirtieth anniversary, are but one of the many admiring references which he made through the years to the genius of his classmate. More than once he commented on the great strength that the opening lines gained from the use of the pronoun "My" rather than "Our"—with every singer the ascription is distinctly personal. The fact that "America" was sung by so many millions especially appealed to Holmes, and on one occasion, in a characteristically generous outburst of appreciation, he exclaimed to his friend, "Your name and fame will live when I and my works are forgotten."

It is not surprising that amid the chorus of praise there has been some vigorous dissent. "America" has been criticised as not being "truly national." "Rocks and rills" and "templed hills" suit New England, but nothing is said of the rolling prairies of the great West. In his annotations on the Episcopal Hymn Book, Dr. Bodine intimates that this was one reason why Dr. Smith's hymn, as generally used, was not included in that collection, "for ours is a national church." "Land of the pilgrim's pride" is objected to as introducing a sectarian bias, while "My native country, thee" unfits the hymn to be sung by the multitudes from other lands. It must also be admitted that some of the lines are not above criticism from a literary point of view.

But after all has been said, the fact remains that for fourscore years "America" has held the supreme place as our national hymn, and as yet no serious rival has made its appearance. Breathing the loftiest patriotism, "one hundred per cent American," surcharged with love for country and trust in God, this hymn merits the hold which it has upon the affections of the great mass of the people.

Dr. Smith was born in 1808, two years after the famous "Haystack Meeting" at Williams College, which marked the birth of the modern missionary movement in America. In the decades that immediately followed, there sprang up an urgent demand for missionary hymns, but while many were written few have survived. The most notable one among them came from the pen of Samuel F. Smith. It appeared in 1832, the same year as "America." The young man of twenty-four was a student in the theological seminary, preparing for the Baptist ministry. The spirit of the times had laid hold of him, and he was aflame with missionary zeal. Though circumstances afterward prevented, he was planning to go to the foreign field. During his senior year at Andover, reports began to arrive of the movement toward Christianity in Burmah under Adoniram Judson, the famous Baptist missionary. After years of untold suffering and dis-

couragement, Judson wrote that the light was breaking and hundreds were accepting Christ. Smith was exultant; he felt that the universal triumph of the Cross was drawing near, and with eager optimism he wrote this noble hymn:

"The morning light is breaking,
The darkness disappears;
The sons of earth are waking
To penitential tears:
Each breeze that sweeps the ocean
Brings tidings from afar,
Of nations in commotion,
Prepared for Zion's war.

"See heathen nations bending
Before the God we love,
And thousand hearts ascending
In gratitude above:
While sinners, now confessing,
The gospel call obey,
And seek the Saviour's blessing,
A nation in a day.

"Blest river of salvation,
Pursue thy onward way;
Flow thou to every nation,
Nor in thy richness stay:
Stay not till all the lowly
Triumphant reach their home;
Stay not till all the holy
Proclaim, 'The Lord is come.' "

This ranks with Heber's "From Greenland's icy mountains" as one of the greatest of missionary lyrics. It has been translated into many

languages and is sung around the world. While it is the best, it is only one among several fine hymns on this subject from the same pen.

Shortly before leaving the seminary, Mr. Smith wrote "The Missionary's Farewell," which at once became very popular, and during the next fifty years was probably sung on more farewell occasions than any other hymn. When we remember what it meant to go to the foreign field nearly one hundred years ago, the months at sea, the numberless perils, the grave uncertainty of ever seeing one's native land again, we can the more readily appreciate the intensity of these lines:

"Yes, my native land, I love thee;
All thy scenes, I love them well;
Friends, connections, happy country,
Can I bid you all farewell?
Can I leave you,
Far in heathen lands to dwell?

. . . . . .

"Bear me on, thou restless ocean;
Let the winds my canvas swell;
Heaves my heart with warm emotion,
While I go far hence to dwell.
Glad, I bid thee,
Native land, farewell! farewell!"

It is interesting to know that though Dr. Smith was never able to gratify his early desire to enter the foreign field, he gave a son to the work, who for many years was a distinguished

leader in Burmah. The father himself was a life-long student of missions; he wrote extensively on the subject, and he visited the principal mission countries.

The months just preceding and immediately following his graduation from the seminary were remarkably prolific in the number of well-known hymns which this young theologue produced. Besides those already mentioned, we have that beautiful evening hymn:

"Softly fades the twilight ray
Of the holy Sabbath day;
Gently as life's setting sun,
When the Christian's course is run.

. . . . . .

"Peace is on the world abroad,
'Tis the holy peace of God,
Symbol of the peace within
When the spirit rests from sin.

. . . . . .

"Saviour, may our Sabbaths be
Days of joy and peace in thee,
Till in heaven our souls repose,
Where the Sabbath ne'er shall close."

About this same time he composed the hymn, which, as altered by Thomas Hastings, has been a favorite in evangelistic services ever since:

"To-day the Saviour calls:
Ye wanderers, come;
O ye benighted souls,
Why longer roam?"

To the year 1833 belong those lines written on the death of a young lady friend, which used to be sung or quoted at so many funerals:

"Sister, thou wast mild and lovely,
Gentle as the summer breeze,
Pleasant as the air of evening,
When it floats among the trees."

It is not surprising that Mr. Smith's gifts were early recognized and that compilers eagerly sought his hymns for their collections. In 1843, assisted by Dr. Baron Stow, he published *The Psalmist,* in which twenty-six of the hymns were from his own pen. For half a century this was regarded as the best collection among the Baptists. Dr. Smith continued to write to the end of his long life. In 1894, only a year before his death, when eighty-six years old, he composed a hymn on the church, which holds a high place:

"Founded on thee, our only Lord,
On thee, the everlasting Rock,
Thy church shall stand as stands thy word,
Nor fear the storm, nor dread the shock.

"For thee our waiting spirits yearn,
For thee this house of praise we rear;
To thee with longing hearts we turn;
Come, fix thy glorious presence here.

"Come, with thy Spirit and thy power,
The Conqueror, once the Crucified;
Our God, our Strength, our King, our Tower,
Here plant thy throne, and here abide.

"Accept the work our hands have wrought;
Accept, O God, this earthly shrine;
Be thou our Rock, our Life, our Thought,
And we, as living temples, thine."

The aged poet died very suddenly on Saturday, November 16, 1895, just as he was leaving Boston to meet a preaching engagement for the following day.

CHAPTER XVII

W. H. FURNESS, WARE, BURLEIGH, BULFINCH

William Henry Furness

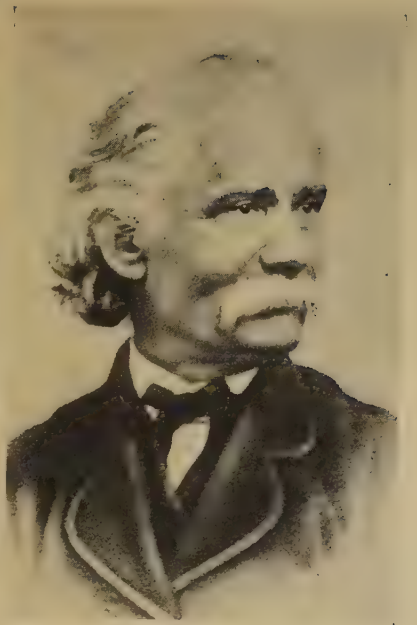
1802–1896

The remarkable life of Rev. William Henry Furness, D.D., almost spanned the nineteenth century. He was born in Boston in 1802, and died in Philadelphia in 1896. Graduating from Harvard at the age of eighteen, and finishing his theological course three years later, he became pastor of the first Unitarian Church in Philadelphia in 1825. Here he continued in full service, loved and revered, till 1875, a pastorate with few parallels in American history. He was a prominent and earnest advocate of various reform movements, an accomplished scholar, and a voluminous author.

He wrote a number of hymns, but while they all reach a high level of literary excellence, and are found in Unitarian collections at home and in England, few of them have passed into more general use. One of the best is a morning hymn, all the more valuable because songs for the opening of the day are not as common as for the close. This one was written by Dr. Furness in 1840:

WILLIAM HENRY FURNESS

HENRY WARE, JR.



WILLIAM HENRY BURLEIGH

"In the morning I will raise
To my God the voice of praise;
With his kind protection blest,
Sweet and deep has been my rest.

"In the morning I will pray
For his blessing on the day;
What this day shall be my lot,
Light or darkness, know I not.

"Should it be with clouds o'ercast,
Clouds of sorrow gathering fast,
Thou, who givest light divine,
Shine within me, Lord, O shine.

"Show me, if I tempted be,
How to find all strength in thee,
And a perfect triumph win
Over every bosom sin.

"Keep my feet from secret snares,
Keep my eyes, O God, from tears,
Every step thy grace attend,
And my soul from death defend.

"Then, when fall the shades of night,
All within shall still be light;
Thou wilt peace around diffuse,
Gently as the evening dews."

Henry Ware, Jr.

1794–1843

American hymnody is indebted for many of its choicest contributions to a group of New England Unitarians. It has often been remarked that in hymns, especially those of a high order,

differences of creed are rarely noticeable. Hosts of ardent Protestants joyfully sing the words of Newman and Faber and other Roman Catholic writers, often in entire ignorance as to whence the songs came. Oliver Wendell Holmes, the Unitarian, more than once spoke of his delight in Watts and Wesley; and in the average Trinitarian audience, it is doubtful if one in a hundred realizes that many of the hymns he loves are from Unitarian sources. Happily, in the hymns of the church universal, varieties of faith blend together in a most wonderful and blessed harmony, as the souls of men are outpoured in worship to Almighty God.

Henry Ware, Jr., eldest son of the Rev. Henry Ware, was born in Hingham, Massachusetts, in 1794. For thirty-five years his father was a professor of divinity at Harvard College. The son, who was a young man of brilliant parts, graduated with high honor from Harvard at the age of eighteen. Entering the ministry he became pastor, in 1817, of the Second Unitarian Church in Boston, where, at a later date, Ralph Waldo Emerson was chosen as his colleague. In 1830, having been appointed professor of Pulpit Eloquence and Pastoral Care at Cambridge, he entered on these new duties. But his health was never good, and in a few years he was compelled to retire. He died in 1843.

He was a voluminous writer, but his richest legacy was a group of hymns of unusual excellence. The one beginning, "We rear not a temple, like Judah's of old," is used less often because it was written for the dedication of a church. But parts of it, such as the closing stanza, with its warm evangelical appeal, are adapted to any occasion:

"O come in the power of thy life-giving word,
And reveal to each heart its Redeemer and Lord;
Till faith bring the peace to the penitent given,
And love fill the air with the fragrance of heaven."

The triumphant hymn on the "Resurrection of Christ," written in 1817, the year in which Mr. Ware was inducted into the ministry, was born of a belief that never wavered in this central doctrine of our faith. It holds a place among our noblest Easter lyrics:

"Lift your glad voices in triumph on high,
For Jesus hath risen and man cannot die;
Vain were the terrors that gathered around him,
And short the dominion of death and the grave;
He burst from the fetters of darkness that bound him,
Resplendent in glory, to live and to save!
Loud was the chorus of angels on high,
The Saviour hath risen, and man shall not die.

"Glory to God, in full anthems of joy;
The being he gave us death cannot destroy:
Sad were the life we must part with to-morrow,

If tears were our birthright, and death were our end;
But Jesus hath cheered the dark valley of sorrow,
And bade us, immortal, to heaven ascend:
Lift then your voices in triumph on high,
For Jesus hath risen, and man shall not die."

"This is Boston's best. Unitarianism rises to the height of the Methodist shout, 'Glory to God,' " is Bishop Henry W. Warren's comment on this hymn.

There is one more hymn, written by Mr. Ware when he was a young man of twenty-nine, which calls for special mention. It is based on the words of Revelation: "Behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne, . . . and there was a rainbow, round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald." "And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." The hymn that follows, with genuine inspiration echoes the language of the Seer of Patmos:

"Around the throne of God
The host angelic throngs;
They spread their palms abroad,
And shout perpetual songs:
Him first they own,
Him last and best;
God ever blest,
And God alone.

HENRY WARE, JR.

"Their golden crowns they fling
Before His throne of light,
And strike the rapturous string,
Unceasing, day and night:
'Earth, heaven, and sea,
Thy praise declare;
For Thine they are,
And Thine shall be.

" 'O Holy, Holy Lord,
Creation's sovereign King!
Thy majesty adored
Let all creation sing;
Who wast, and art,
And art to be;
Nor time shall see
Thy sway depart.

" 'Great are thy works of praise,
O God of boundless might;
All just and true thy ways,
Thou King of saints, in light:
Let all above,
And all below,
Conspire to show
Thy power and love.

" 'Who shall not fear thee, Lord,
And magnify thy name?
Thy judgments sent abroad,
Thy holiness proclaim:
Nations shall throng
From every shore,
And all adore
In one loud song.'

"While thus the powers on high
Their swelling chorus raise,
Let earth and man reply,
And echo back the praise:
His glory own,
First, last, and best;
God ever blest,
And God alone."

William Henry Burleigh

1812–1871

"So you liked the verses; but you must remember that I do not claim to be a poet. Were it not for a few who love me, and who, because they love me, take pleasure in my verse, I should never attempt another line." Thus Mr. Burleigh replied to a friend who had spoken warmly of one of his poems. He may not have been a poet in a large way, but he wrote several hymns which are widely sung and which have brought blessing to many hearts. To-day we think of him on this account, but two generations ago men spoke of him as the zealous reformer, who as editor and lecturer was doing his utmost to arouse the conscience of the people.

He was born in Woodstock, Connecticut, in 1812, and reared on a farm, with no lack of hard work from dawn till past sunset. But as he grew up he looked beyond the home-acres. He saw that all was not right with the world or with his

own country, and he longed to have a hand in crushing certain great wrongs. Above all else, slavery and intemperance were the evils that he abhorred, and as a mere boy he vowed that he would spend his life in helping to destroy them. His mother was a Bradford, a lineal descendant of William Bradford of Mayflower fame, and her son had militant blood in his veins.

As soon as he reached manhood he entered the fray. He published *The Christian Witness* and afterward *The Temperance Banner,* in Pittsburgh. Then he edited an antislavery paper in Hartford. In 1849 he became agent of the New York State Temperance Society, at the same time publishing *The Prohibitionist.* His tongue kept pace with his pen. He was a man of striking appearance and of eloquent speech, and he was a power both on and off the platform. He went everywhere, in lecture and address seeking to turn public sentiment against the evils of the day.

But he was in advance of the times. Men called him a fanatic; mobs sought to intimidate him; society turned him out. For himself he cared nothing, but that his family should suffer, and so unjustly, cut him to the quick. Painful experiences lay in the background of that beautiful hymn, "Still will we trust," regarded by many as the best he ever composed:

"Still will we trust though earth seem dark and
dreary,
And the heart faint beneath his chastening rod;
Though rough and steep our pathway, worn and
weary,
Still will we trust in God!

"Our eyes see dimly till by faith anointed,
And our blind choosing brings us grief and pain;
Through him alone who hath our way appointed
We find our peace again.

"Choose for us, God! nor let our weak preferring
Cheat our poor souls of good thou hast designed;
Choose for us, God! thy wisdom is unerring,
And we are fools and blind.

"So from our sky the night shall furl her shadows,
And day pour gladness through his golden gates;
Our rough path lead to flower-enamelled meadows,
Where joy our coming waits.

"Let us press on in patient self-denial,
Accept the hardship, shrink not from the loss:
Our guerdon lies beyond the hour of trial,
Our crown beyond the cross."

Mr. Burleigh's hymns began to find their way across the Atlantic soon after they were written, and English compilers were prompt to recognize their worth and to appropriate them. So it has come about that his productions are better known and more widely used on the other side than at home. But the fine hymn on "Divide Guidance," opening with the stanza:

"Lead us, O Father, in the paths of peace;
Without thy guiding hand we go astray,
And doubts appall, and sorrows still increase;
Lead us through Christ, the true and living Way,"

is a favorite everywhere.

In February, 1863, Mr. Burleigh's father died, and in the course of the two years following he lost his wife, his eldest son, and his eldest daughter. They were staggering blows. He wrote to a friend: "It is not without strong wrestlings that doubts and murmurings are put under my feet and I am enabled to struggle up into the purer atmosphere of faith." It was this bitter experience that gave birth to that noble hymn, of which we quote the first and last stanzas:

"O, deem not that earth's crowning bliss
Is found in joy alone;
For sorrow, bitter though it be,
Hath blessings all its own;
From lips divine, like healing balm,
To hearts oppressed and torn,
This heavenly consolation fell—
'Blessèd are they that mourn.'

. . . . . .

"How rich and sweet and full of strength
Our human spirits are,
Baptized into the sanctities
Of suffering and of prayer!
Supernal wisdom, love divine,
Breathed through the lips which said,
'O, blessèd are the souls that mourn—
They shall be comforted!' "

Stephen Greenleaf Bulfinch
1809–1870

Stephen Greenleaf Bulfinch, whose father was the distinguished architect who drew the plans for the Capitol at Washington, was born in Boston in 1809. Following his collegiate course and his graduation from the Harvard Divinity School, like so many of the gifted New England young men of that period, he entered the Unitarian ministry. His first pastorate was in Georgia, and then he returned North, where he served a number of churches till his death in 1870. He had a poetical nature and began writing sacred verse when he was only a youth. His first book, *Contemplations of the Saviour,* appeared when he was twenty-three. Two years later he brought out a second volume of poems, but in Charleston, South Carolina, where the book was published, only five copies were sold, and of these, the gentleman and his wife to whom it was dedicated bought three. And yet among the contents were verses that were destined to find their way into various hymnals, both at home and abroad. There were these truly worshipful stanzas, written at the age of twenty-two and perhaps the best known of any of the author's sacred poetry:

"Hail to the Sabbath day!
The day divinely given,
When men to God their homage pay,
And earth draws near to heaven.

STEPHEN GREENLEAF BULFINCH

"Lord, in this sacred hour,
Within thy courts we bend,
And bless thy love, and own thy power,
Our Father and our Friend.

"But thou art not alone
In courts by mortals trod;
Nor only is the day thine own
When man draws near to God.

"Thy temple is the arch
Of yon unmeasured sky;
Thy Sabbath, the stupendous march
Of vast eternity.

"Lord, may that holier day
Dawn on thy servants' sight;
And purer worship may we pay
In heaven's unclouded light."

This "gentle and saintly bard," as his friends delighted to call him, is remembered as a man of deep spirituality, as well as an extensive and gifted writer.

CHAPTER XVIII

MRS. ESLING, ALICE CARY, PHŒBE CARY, MISS WARNER, MISS LATHBURY, MRS. MILLER

Catherine Watterman Esling
1812–1897

"Come unto me, when shadows darkly gather,
When the sad heart is weary and distressed,
Seeking for comfort from your heavenly Father,
Come unto me, and I will give you rest."

This is the third stanza in a poem which in the original form contains nine stanzas. It was written by Miss Catherine H. Watterman of Philadelphia, in 1839, the year before her marriage to Captain George J. Esling. She wrote a number of poems which were published in 1850, but this is her only hymn. It voices in language of tender and persuasive beauty the invitation of the Master to come unto him, and its use, both in public and in private worship, has brought blessing to multitudes of sad and needy hearts.

It is especially effective as sung to the tune "Henley," by Lowell Mason.

"Large are the mansions in thy Father's dwelling,
Glad are the homes that sorrows never dim;
Sweet are the harps in holy music swelling,
Soft are the tones which raise the heavenly hymn."

MARY ARTEMISIA LATHBURY ANNA BARTLETT WARNER

PHŒBE CARY

ALICE CARY EMILY HUNTINGTON MILLER

Mrs. Esling was a devout Episcopalian. She died in Philadelphia, the city of her birth, in 1897, at the ripe age of eighty-five.

Alice Cary
1820–1871

Phœbe Cary
1824–1871

These sisters were so linked in their lives—twin souls—that we cannot think or speak of the one without including the other. A tender interest gathers about the hymns they wrote, because of the peculiar pathos running through their life-story. They were born on a farm near Cincinnati, Alice in 1820 and Phœbe four years later. It was a home of poverty. There were nine children, and it was a ceaseless struggle to keep out of debt. As Alice once said, "For the first fourteen years of my life, it seemed as if there was actually nothing in existence but work."

The sisters were ambitious, but they were shut in on every side. There were less than a dozen books in the house, and others could be procured only at great sacrifice. Presently the mother died, and then a stepmother came who had no sympathy with the girls' desire for an education. She denied them the use of candles for evening study, and for years all their night reading was done by the light of a tallow dip. But they persevered. They began to write poems which were printed in various papers and magazines, and

which brought letters of encouragement, one of them, which delighted their hearts, being from Whittier.

In the summer of 1849, a New York publisher agreed to bring out a small volume of their verse, paying them the princely sum of one hundred dollars. They were so elated that they decided to take a trip east, quite a venture for two country girls in those days. Among other places visited they timidly wended their way to Amesbury and called on the Quaker poet who had so kindly written them. After the death of Alice, Whittier reverted to that early visit in his touching poem, "The Singer," in which he tells how,

> "Years since (but names to me before),
> Two sisters sought at eve my door;
> Two song birds wandering from their nest,
> A gray old farmhouse in the West."

In the fall of 1850, Alice moved to New York, which was henceforth her home. The following spring Phœbe joined her. The sisters practiced the strictest economy; they would rather live on a crust than go in debt. During the early years there were some severe struggles. They were entirely dependent on their writing for an income, and the chief burden rested on Alice, who was the readier and the more diligent of the two in the use of her pen. As time went on the income became ampler and more assured, and the sisters

enjoyed every comfort. But to the end, Alice could not escape the spur of necessity; she knew that the writing must be done. It preyed upon her health, and a constitution never strong succumbed. Her sufferings were very great. At the funeral service, her pastor, Dr. Deems, of the Church of the Strangers, told how he "had been by her side when the pain was so intense that the prints of her finger nails would be left in the palm of his hand as he was holding hers." But she made no complaint. It was shortly before her death that she wrote the only poem which to any extent has been used as a hymn. It is unfortunate that one who produced so much that was saturated with deep spiritual feeling, expressed with such tender grace—poems that have brought comfort and uplift to many lives—should have left little which the church has been prompted to include in its hymnody. The hymn referred to, entitled "Dying Hymn," is as follows:

1547

"Earth, with its dark and dreadful ills,
Recedes, and fades away;
Lift up your heads, ye heavenly hills;
Ye gates of death, give way!

"My soul is full of whispered song;
My blindness is my sight;
The shadows that I feared so long
Are all alive with light.

"The while my pulses faintly beat,
My faith doth so abound,
I feel grow firm beneath my feet
The green immortal ground.

"That faith to me a courage gives,
Low as the grave to go;
I know that my Redeemer lives:
That I shall live, I know.

"The palace walls I almost see,
Where dwells my Lord and King;
O grave, where is thy victory!
O death, where is thy sting!"

It was given to the younger sister, Phœbe, to write "One sweetly solemn thought," a hymn that will never die. On a Sunday morning, in the year 1852, she had attended church as usual, but the sermon, on the brevity of life, impressed her in a very unusual way. It suggested the theme of a hymn, a theme which kept revolving in her mind to the close of the service and all the way home. As soon as she was alone, she took up her pen and in a short time the hymn was finished. The meter was irregular and she never had a thought that it would be sung, but it speedily gained a popularity which has never diminished. Dr. Deems tells that one day, as he and Phœbe were working together, making their selections for a new hymn book for the Church of the Strangers, he said to her, "Now, Phœbe, let us

put in your 'Sweetly solemn thought.'" "O, that was not written for a hymn." "Nevertheless, people will sing it"; and he pressed the matter. "Well, I'll look it over and fix it up. Posterity never did anything for me, but I suppose I must do something for posterity. I'll rewrite it just as I want it to stand forever, and I'll never touch it again." The following is the final version:

"One sweetly solemn thought
Comes to me o'er and o'er,—
I am nearer my home to-day
Than I ever have been before.

"Nearer my Father's house,
Where the many mansions be;
Nearer the great white throne;
Nearer the crystal sea;

"Nearer the bound of life,
Where we lay our burdens down;
Nearer leaving the cross;
Nearer gaining the crown.

"But the waves of that silent sea
Roll dark before my sight,
That brightly the other side
Break on a shore of light.

"O if my mortal feet
Have almost gained the brink,
If it be I am nearer home
Even to-day than I think,

"Father, perfect my trust;
Let my spirit feel in death
That her feet are firmly set
On the rock of a living faith."

"It seems to me that a cord stretches from Alice's heart to mine," said Phœbe one day. The sisters were inseparable. Neither could live without the other. When Alice was taken, Phœbe was only forty-five. Apparently her best days were still ahead, but at once a change took place. Dr. Deems wrote of her: "From the time of Alice's death she began to decline. Her health had been perfect; she scarcely knew anything of aches and pains; there was not a gray hair on her head; but she aged; grew pale and wrinkled and gray; everything lost power to interest her. A few Sundays after Alice died Phœbe was in church, and at the close of the service came to Mrs. Deems and said, 'I feel so lonely; let me sit with you in your pew during church service.' She came into my study and laid her head upon my shoulder and wept violently." She lingered on for five months, and then she too entered "the waves of that silent sea, that brightly break on a shore of light," and the two sister-singers were reunited forever.

Anna Bartlett Warner
1820–1915

In the years gone by, how many travelers by the Hudson River steamers have passed West Point without realizing that on the neighboring Constitution Island lived the two Warner sisters, Susan and Anna, whose stories were in such popular demand! So far as the great world was concerned the women led a quiet and secluded life, but they always kept in close touch with the United States Military Academy. For well-nigh two generations they conducted a Bible Class for the cadets, thus coming to be regarded as almost part of the teaching force of the institution. When they died the funeral of each was held with military honors.

Susan was the older and the better known as a writer, but it is to the poetic talent of Anna that we are indebted for several of our much-loved hymns. In one of her first books, *Say and Seal,* written in collaboration with her sister and published in 1860, there appeared that perfect little gem:

"Jesus loves me, this I know,
For the Bible tells me so"—

a song that for more than half a century children the world over have loved and have known by heart. In mission lands it is a favorite hymn with the Christians both young and old. Even on

the mountains of interior Yunnan, in China, converts among the tribes-people sing it, sometimes simultaneously in many different dialects, and all over the land it has led to the conversion of multitudes.

Her *Wayfaring Hymns,* which came out in 1869, contained a selection entitled, "The Song of a Tired Servant." In a letter recently received from a ministerial friend, he had spoken of his weariness at the close of the day but of his joy in the work of the Lord. This suggested the familiar and beautiful poem: "One more day's work for Jesus." Unfortunately, two of the best stanzas are sometimes omitted as the piece appears in our hymnals:

"One more day's work for Jesus:
How glorious is my King!
'Tis joy, not duty,
To speak his beauty;
My soul mounts on the wing
At the mere thought
How Christ her life hath bought.

"One more day's work for Jesus:
In hope, in faith, in prayer,
His word I've spoken—
His bread I've broken,
To souls faint with despair;
And bade them flee
To him who hath saved me."

In *Hymns of the Church Militant,* compiled by Miss Anna Warner in 1858, we find one from

her own pen of rare beauty. It was written several years prior to its appearance in print. In one of Susan's diaries, under date of February 8, 1851, there is this entry: "The next day, Sunday, in the afternoon, A. had been copying off some hymns for Emmeline's book, and left them with me to look over. I had not read two verses of 'We would see Jesus,' when I thought of Anna, and merely casting my eye down, the others so delighted and touched me that I left it for tears and petitions. I wished A. might prove the author—and after I found she was, I sat by her a little while with my head against her, crying such delicious tears."

Suggested by the appeal of the Greeks to Philip, "Sir, we would see Jesus," the hymn voices the deep yearning of human hearts in all the ages to look beyond the veil, and, if only for one brief moment, to see him whom our souls adore, and "whom, having not seen," we love. We quote the opening and closing stanzas:

"We would see Jesus: for the shadows lengthen
Across this little landscape of our life;
We would see Jesus, our weak faith to strengthen
For the last weariness, the final strife.

"We would see Jesus: this is all we're needing;
Strength, joy, and willingness come with the sight;
We would see Jesus, dying, risen, pleading;
Then welcome day, and farewell mortal night."

Mary Artemisia Lathbury

1841–1913

Miss Lathbury holds a unique place among our American hymn-writers. She was long known as the "Laureate of Chautauqua." It has been given to few poets to have their hymns used by as large and enthusiastic and cultured audiences as have sung the hymns of this gifted woman.

The child of devout Christian parents, she was born in Manchester, New York, in 1841. Her father was a local preacher in the Methodist Episcopal Church, and two of her brothers were ordained to the Methodist ministry. She early developed a talent both for composing verses and for drawing, and as a mere girl her favorite pastime was the writing of short poems adorned with original illustrations. But almost from the first the pastime became a part of her religion. One day she seemed to hear a voice saying to her: "Remember, my child, that you have a gift of weaving fancies into verse, and a gift with the pencil of producing visions that come to your heart; consecrate these to me as thoroughly and as definitely as you do your inmost spirit." She was not disobedient to the heavenly call.

As the years passed and her talents matured, Miss Lathbury became widely known as a contributor to periodicals for children and young

people. In 1874, Dr. John H. Vincent, who at that time was Secretary of the Methodist Sunday School Union, engaged her as his assistant in the editorial department. Not only did this widen her opportunity for usefulness as a writer for children, but it brought her into close touch with the Chautauqua movement at its very beginning. The Chautauqua idea appealed to her strongly and she gave herself enthusiastically to its promotion. Her poetic gift was at once appreciated, and through the years she was appealed to again and again for hymns to be sung on special occasions. She gladly responded, and it was in this way that her best-known hymns had their origin.

The one written for the Centennial celebration in 1876, with the chorus:

"Arise and shine in youth immortal,
Thy light is come, thy King appears!
Beyond the Century's swinging portal,
Breaks a new dawn—*the thousand* years!"—

impressed Frances E. Willard as "the most complete utterance of that sublime period," and it was a favorite with the author herself.

Although Chautauqua started out as a Methodist enterprise, under the liberal leadership of Dr. Vincent it soon lost its sectarian character and made its appeal to all Christians alike. Miss Lathbury caught the spirit of her chief, and for

the summer of 1881 she wrote her greatly admired hymn on "The Nameless Fold":

"O Shepherd of the Nameless Fold—
The blessed church to be—
Our hearts with love and longing turn
To find their rest in thee!

" 'Thy Kingdom come'—its heavenly walls
Unseen around us rise,
And deep in loving human hearts
Its broad foundation lies."

It was a beautiful prayer for that spirit of Christian unity for which Chautauqua has stood through all the years.

One of her finest poems, meriting a wider use than it has received, especially as a morning carol, is the one which opens with the lines:

"Arise, all souls, arise! the watch is past;
A glory breaks above the cloud at last.
There comes a rushing, mighty wind again!
The breath of God is still the life of men;
The day ascending fills the waiting skies,
All souls, arise!"

The two best-known hymns by Miss Lathbury, "Break Thou the bread of life," and "Day is dying in the west," were given to Dr. Vincent in 1887. The former of these, a little gem, she called a "Study Song," and it has always been a rare favorite. When we remember that it was intended primarily for the hungry students of

the Word on the shore of Lake Chautauqua, we feel the appropriateness of the allusion to the breaking and blessing of the loaves "beside the sea" of Galilee. The hymn is loved both at home and abroad. Dr. G. Campbell Morgan always asked the congregation to sing it at the weekly meetings of his great Bible class in London, just before he began the exposition of the lesson:

"Break thou the Bread of life,
Dear Lord, to me,
As thou didst break the loaves
Beside the sea;
Beyond the sacred page
I seek thee, Lord;
My spirit pants for thee,
O living Word!

"Bless thou the truth, dear Lord,
To me, to me,
As thou didst bless the bread
By Galilee;
Then shall all bondage cease,
All fetters fall;
And I shall find my peace,
My All-in-All!"

Without doubt the finest hymn that Miss Lathbury ever wrote, and the one that everywhere has been received with praise, is, "Day is dying in the west." It was written at the request of Dr. Vincent. From the beginning, the vesper hour at Chautauqua, in a peculiar way, has seemed

to gather about it the spiritual beauty and uplift of the whole day. But there was no hymn quite suited to the hour till this "poetess and saint," as Dr. Vincent used to call her, made her contribution. Since then this lyric has been sung around the world. Some years after its first appearance, W. Garrett Horder, the well-known English anthologist, chanced to see it in a book recently received from an American friend. Who Miss Lathbury was he had no idea, but his practiced eye immediately recognized in the poem a masterpiece. In the enthusiasm of a genuine discovery, he wrote: "It is one of the finest and most distinctive hymns of modern times. It deserves to rank with 'Lead, Kindly Light,' of Cardinal Newman, for its picturesqueness and allusionness, and above all else for this, that devout souls, no matter what their distinctive beliefs, can through it voice their deepest feelings and aspirations." It is sung in many places and by many voices, but to be fully appreciated it must be heard in the great auditorium at Chautauqua, where the people know it and love it as nowhere else, and where the words, pealed out to the matchless melody of Professor Sherwin, to which they were long since wedded, sweep the soul up to the very throne of the eternal God.

As originally written, the hymn consisted of

two stanzas. In 1890, in response to the earnest request of many friends, Miss Lathbury added a third and a fourth stanza:

"Day is dying in the west;
Heaven is touching earth with rest;
Wait and worship while the night
Sets her evening lamps alight
Through all the sky.
Holy, holy, holy Lord God of Hosts!
Heaven and earth are full of thee!
Heaven and earth are praising thee,
O Lord most high.

"Lord of life, beneath the dome
Of the universe, thy home,
Gather us who seek thy face
To the fold of thy embrace,
For thou art nigh.

"While the deepening shadows fall,
Heart of Love, enfolding all,
Through the glory and the grace
Of the stars that veil thy face,
Our hearts ascend.

"When forever from our sight
Pass the stars, the day, the night,
Lord of angels, on our eyes
Let eternal morning rise,
And shadows end."

Miss Lathbury lived in and near New York, where she carried on her literary and artistic work. She died in 1913.

Emily Huntington Miller

1833–1913

Emily Huntington Miller, daughter of Rev. Thomas Huntington, was born in 1833, and grew up in a Methodist parsonage. She did the unusual thing for a young woman in those days—she went to college, graduating from Oberlin in the class of '57. Three years later she was married to Mr. John E. Miller. For nearly a decade subsequent to his death, she was the Dean of the Woman's College of Northwestern University, where she made a blessed impression on thousands of girls.

She was a writer nearly all her life, and many of her poems possess real merit though comparatively few have found a place in the church hymnals. Of her hymns now in use, one of the choicest was written, by request, for the Woman's Missionary Day at the Parliament of Religions in Chicago, in 1893. The opening stanza reads:

"Kingdom of light! whose morning star
To Bethlehem's manger led the way,
Not yet upon our longing eyes
Shines the full splendor of thy day:
Yet still across the centuries falls,
Solemn and sweet, our Lord's command;
And still with steadfast faith we cry,
'Lo, the glad kingdom is at hand!' "

But it was with children that Mrs. Miller excelled. The author, who knew her intimately in

his boyhood, vividly recalls her bright and animated ways, and the triumphant appeal that she made to the child heart. From 1867 to 1875 she edited *The Little Corporal,* a magazine for children, which became very popular. It was her habit to write for it, once a month, a short poem which could be set to music. One month, illness delayed the contribution. The last day came; the poem must be provided at once or none would appear in that issue. Mustering all her strength, she set to work. She tells us that "the words were suggested rapidly and continuously," and in "less than fifteen minutes the hymn was written and sent away without any correction." It became better known than anything else she ever wrote:

"I love to hear the story
Which angel voices tell,
How once the King of glory
Came down on earth to dwell.
I am both weak and sinful,
But this I surely know,
The Lord came down to save me,
Because he loved me so.

"I'm glad my blessed Saviour
Was once a child like me,
To show how pure and holy
His little ones may be;
And if I try to follow
His footsteps here below,
He never will forget me,
Because he loves me so.

"To sing his love and mercy
My sweetest songs I'll raise;
And though I cannot see him
I know he hears my praise;
For he has kindly promised
That even I may go
To sing among his angels,
Because he loves me so."

Mrs. Miller, more than anyone else, was surprised at the popularity of this little song. It went everywhere, winning a multitude of friends, on both sides of the Atlantic. It has the unique distinction of being one of the very few American selections admitted to *Hymns Ancient and Modern,* the great hymnbook of the Church of England.

Mr. F. A. Jones, the English writer on hymns, commends very highly another song for children, by Mrs. Miller, not so well known as the favorite just quoted, but of peculiar sweetness:

"Father, while the shadows fall,
With the twilight over all,
Deign to hear my evening prayer,
Make a little child thy care.
Take me in thy holy keeping
Till the morning break;
Guard me through the darkness sleeping,
Bless me when I wake.

"'Twas thy hand that all the day
Scattered joys along my way,
Crowned my life with blessings sweet,
Kept from snares my careless feet.

"Like thy patient love to me,
May my love to others be;
All the wrong my hands have done,
Pardon, Lord, through Christ, thy Son."

CHAPTER XIX

COXE, BROOKS, W. C. DOANE

Arthur Cleveland Coxe

1818–1896

It used to be said of Bishop Coxe that he came nearer being the Keble of America than any other Episcopalian of his day. Born in 1818, the son of a distinguished Presbyterian minister, himself a member of that communion for several years, even as a boy he was restless and declared his intention of becoming a "Churchman." During his undergraduate days at the University of the City of New York, this purpose grew, and at the first opportunity he left the church of his fathers and entered the new fold. As if to emphasize his break with the past, he altered the spelling of his name, adding the "e."

He at once decided to study for the ministry, and after completing the prescribed course was given his first parish. A man of unusual gifts, his progress was rapid. He served in Hartford for a time, and then in Baltimore, whence he was recalled to New York City to become rector of Calvary Church. While there he was elected bishop of Western New York, and at the opening of 1865 he entered on his new duties, moving to Buffalo, which was thereafter his home.

ARTHUR CLEVELAND COXE

PHILLIPS BROOKS

He was a man of intense and militant spirit, especially on all matters ecclesiastical—much like his father; and many a battle-royal the two men had in discussing their rival claims. All his life long the bishop was a zealous apostle of church unity, but he could see only one way in which it could be brought about. He felt that passionate devotion to the church of his choice which is so often found in those who have changed from one communion to another.

Soon after leaving college, and amid the glow of his reception into a new church home, while still a youth of scarcely twenty-one he wrote a ballad entitled, "Chelsea." It was first printed in *The Churchman,* and afterward in his volume of *Christian Ballads.* We prize it because it contains that noble hymn, beginning:

"O where are kings and empires now,
Of old that went and came?
But, Lord, thy church is praying yet,
A thousand years the same."

In the original, the third line read, "But holy church is praying yet." The thought of the young author may have been quite restricted when he wrote these words, but the various denominations have felt no hesitation in appropriating the hymn, and it has been used everywhere with blessing to the singers. The General Conference of the Evangelical Alliance was held in

New York City in 1873. A friend who was present, in describing it to Dr. Duffield, said: "It was at the time when so much had been said about the 'prayer-test,' and when we scarcely knew whether the faith of the church might not have been shaken for the moment by the universal stress of skepticism. President Woolsey [of Yale] was giving the opening address. After referring to the prevalent skepticism, he looked up with that peculiar twinkle of the eye which we all recollect —at once expressive of denial and satisfaction— and repeated the first stanza of Bishop Coxe's hymn:

> " 'O where are kings and empires now,
> Of old that went and came?
> But, Lord, thy church is praying *yet*,
> A thousand years the same.'

"For a moment there was silence. In another moment the full significance of the reference had flashed on every mind, and the response was instantaneous and universal. Shouts, waving of handkerchiefs, clapping of hands, stamping of feet—I never knew anything like it. Round after round continued, until the storm of applause ended in a burst of grateful tears. No one doubted that the church still believed in prayer and that the tempest had passed without the loss of a sail."

In 1840, when a young student of twenty-two,

Mr. Coxe gave to the world his most popular poetical work, a volume of *Christian Ballads.* Both at home and in England it met with widespread favor, which continued on through the years. In this collection, in addition to the poem just referred to, are those fine stanzas which likewise have found a place in so many hymnals:

"How beauteous were the marks divine,
That in thy meekness used to shine,
That lit thy lonely pathway, trod
In wondrous love, O Lamb of God!

"O who like thee, so calm, so bright,
Thou Son of man, thou Light of Light?
O who like thee did ever go
So patient, through a world of woe?

"O who like thee so humbly bore
The scorn, the scoffs of men, before?
So meek, forgiving, God-like, high,
So glorious in humility?

"And death, that sets the prisoner free,
Was pang, and scoff, and scorn to thee;
Yet love through all thy torture glowed,
And mercy with thy lifeblood flowed.

"O wondrous Lord, my soul would be
Still more and more conformed to thee,
And learn of thee, the lowly One,
And like thee, all my journey run."

As he grew older and came under the full burden of parish duties, he wrote fewer poems, but in the earlier years his soul burned with poetic

fervor. Following his *Christian Ballads* he published another volume of verse in 1842. It is here that we find his "Watch-words: A Hymn for the Times," glowing with the militant spirit of the author. One might easily suppose that it had been written expressly for the present day. Parts of it have long been included in a number of hymn-collections. Never was its use as appropriate as now. Listen to the challenge of these lines!

"We are living—we are dwelling—
In a grand and awful time:
In an age, on ages telling,
To be living is sublime.

"Hark! the waking up of nations,
Gog and Magog, to the fray:
Hark! what soundeth is Creation's
Groaning for the latter day.

. . . . . .

"Worlds are charging—heaven beholding:
Thou hast but an hour to fight;
Now, the blazoned Cross unfolding,
On!—right onward, for the right!"

In this same collection of 1842, we have that little poem of tender warning and appeal, which has been so often sung, opening with the stanza:

"In the silent midnight watches,
List,—thy bosom door!
How it knocketh, knocketh, knocketh,
Knocketh, evermore!

Say not 'tis thy pulse is beating:
'Tis thy heart of sin;
'Tis thy Saviour knocks, and crieth
'Rise, and let me in!' "

In 1851 there appeared what many regard as the finest hymn that Bishop Coxe ever wrote, and certainly one of the choicest of missionary lyrics. It was begun at home on Good Friday, but laid aside unfinished. The next year he visited England, and one day as he was strolling through the grounds of Magdalen College, Oxford, it suddenly occurred to him that he had never completed that hymn. Taking a scrap of paper and a pencil he at once wrote the concluding stanzas, and the hymn went forth on its career of blessing. It is in extensive use, its popularity being even greater on the other side of the Atlantic than in America:

"Saviour, sprinkle many nations;
Fruitful let thy sorrows be;
By thy pains and consolations
Draw the Gentiles unto thee:
Of thy cross the wondrous story,
Be it to the nations told;
Let them see thee in thy glory,
And thy mercy manifold.

"Far and wide, though all unknowing,
Pants for thee each mortal breast;
Human tears for thee are flowing,
Human hearts in thee would rest;

Thirsting, as for dews of even,
As the new-mown grass for rain,
Thee they seek, as God of heaven,
Thee, as Man for sinners slain.

"Saviour, lo! the isles are waiting,
Stretched the hand, and strained the sight,
For thy Spirit, new creating,
Love's pure flame and wisdom's light.
Give the word, and of the preacher
Speed the foot, and touch the tongue,
Till on earth by every creature
Glory to the Lamb be sung."

It is singular that for many years the hymns of Bishop Coxe were in much wider use outside the Episcopal Church than among his own people. This was due to a "too scrupulous modesty" which led him as a member of the Episcopal Hymnal Committee to refuse to permit any of his own lyrics to be included in the book. They have been introduced into the new hymnal.

Phillips Brooks

1835–1893

Phillips Brooks was not a poet; he was a preacher. But he had the soul of a poet, and many who were close to him and knew the bent of his mind, believed that had he chosen to devote himself to purely literary work, he might have developed poetical talents of no mean order. But what concerns us is the fact that when he

was a young man of thirty-two, he wrote one of the sweetest Christmas Carols in our English tongue. It remained almost unknown for some years, but finally was "discovered," and now it is a universal favorite. Unnumbered multitudes who will never hear the matchless voice of the great preacher, or even read one of his sermons, are singing with grateful joy, "O little town of Bethlehem." And besides this, Phillips Brooks wrote a number of other carols, not so well known, but of real beauty, and which deserve to be brought out and sung, especially at Christmas and Easter.

These carols illustrate in a very striking way certain outstanding features of the writer's life and ministry. They all center in Jesus Christ. They sing of his birth or they celebrate his resurrection, and they remind us that the whole ministry of this apostolic man strove to exalt Jesus. When he was a student in the theological seminary, he preached a sermon on "The simplicity that is in Christ," and when it was over, a classmate remarked that there was very little simplicity in it and no Christ. Young Brooks determined that never again should it be said of one of his sermons that there was no Christ in it.

He believed in the divine Son of God with all his soul, he preached him, he lived him. How much this meant when a few years later he en-

tered on his wonderful career at Trinity Church, Boston! He was now at the center of the Unitarian movement, a movement that originally signified little more than a protest against the forbidding features of the oldtime Puritan theology, but which had steadily become more radical till Jesus Christ had been dethroned. It claimed among its adherents the intellectual people of the city, nearly all the literary lights, the men in the leading pulpits, and the notable members of the Harvard faculty. The Evangelicals were at a discount and they knew it. Christ and him crucified was still preached but with more or less timidity. Those who would give him a secondary place were in the ascendent.

Suddenly there was heard in Boston a new voice; the young man was not yet thirty-four. Boston-born, Harvard-trained, he had a right to speak. Giant in mind and heart as he was in body, he commanded attention. Every Sunday added to his fame. The finest people in the community thronged his ministry. Quickly he became the dominant pulpit force in all New England, and *he dared to preach Jesus Christ!* But it was not the Christ that had once been set forth there, the one who for years had been persistently pictured as the wrathful judge, with grim delight devoting himself to sweeping sinners into perdition, but rather the Christ, himself the Eternal

Son, who came to teach us that God is our Father and all men his children, and that therefore life is sacred and glorious. The thought is admirably expressed in his Christmas Carol, "The Voice of the Christ-Child."[1]

"The earth has grown cold with its burden of care,
But at Christmas it always is young,
The heart of the jewel burns lustrous and fair,
And its soul full of music breaks forth on the air,
When the song of the Angels is sung.

"It is coming, old earth, it is coming to-night,
On the snowflakes which cover thy sod,
The feet of the Christ-child fall gently and white,
And the voice of the Christ-child tells out with delight
That mankind are the children of God.

"On the sad and the lonely, the wretched and poor,
That voice of the Christ-child shall fall;
And to every blind wanderer opens the door
Of a hope which he dared not to dream of before,
With a sunshine of welcome for all.

"The feet of the humblest may walk in the field
Where the feet of the holiest have trod,
This, this is the marvel to mortals revealed,
When the silvery trumpets of Christmas have pealed,
That mankind are the children of God."

We find the same spirit in his "A Christmas Carol," where he sings:

"Then let every heart keep its Christmas within,
Christ's pity for sorrow, Christ's hatred of sin,

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Christ's care for the weakest, Christ's courage for
right,
Christ's dread of the darkness, Christ's love of the
light;
Everywhere, everywhere, Christmas to-night."

Here was a Christ whom men could love and worship. Many who, like Oliver Wendell Holmes, had turned in bitter protest from the austere preaching of an earlier day, listened to Phillips Brooks with wonder and delight. Henceforth the evangelical faith had a new and secure standing in Boston.

In the Brooks home, when Phillips was a boy, the children were in the habit of learning hymns and reciting them when all the family were together on Sunday evening. In this way, by the time he went to college he had committed two hundred hymns to memory. He had a musical soul. The others in the house could tell when he was up in the morning, because he was always singing, and he continued humming tunes till breakfast.

He spent the summer of 1889 in Japan, and it was during the voyage across the Pacific that he wrote a number of his carols. One of the best is "An Easter Carol."[1] It finely illustrates the virile spirituality of the man:

"Tomb, thou shalt not hold him longer;
Death is strong, but Life is stronger;

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Stronger than the dark, the light;
Stronger then the wrong, the right.
Faith and Hope triumphant say,
Christ will rise on Easter Day.

"While the patient earth lies waking,
Till the morning shall be breaking,
Shuddering 'neath the burden dread
Of her Master, cold and dead,
Hark! she hears the angels say,
Christ will rise on Easter Day.

"And when sunrise smites the mountains,
Pouring light from heavenly fountains,
Then the earth blooms out to greet
Once again the blessed feet;
And her countless voices say,
Christ has risen on Easter Day.

"Up and down our lives obedient
Walk, dear Christ, with footsteps radiant,
Till those garden lives shall be
Fair with duties done for thee;
And our thankful spirits say,
Christ arose on Easter Day."

We have seen how the carols written by Phillips Brooks illustrate his supreme devotion to Jesus Christ. They also show his wonderful love for children, for without such love he could never have written them. Nothing about the man appeals to us more than this. He had no home—in the full sense of the word—of his own, and so he took to his heart the children of others, especially

those of his brother William. His letters, written to them when off on his journeys, were bubbling over with fun. When they were together, he was always eager for a romp. Several dolls were kept at the rectory especially for the entertainment of the young nieces when they came to see their bachelor uncle. Christmas—the real Children's Day—was a time of untold joy for him and for them. How he looked forward to it! How he preached about it! And the most beautiful verse that he ever wrote was in honor of the Christ-Child, God's Christmas gift to the world.

In the summer of 1865 he went abroad for a year of travel. He planned to visit Palestine and to spend Christmas in Bethlehem. On Sunday, December 24, he rode on horseback from Jerusalem to Bethlehem, and before dark he went out to the field where tradition says that the shepherds saw the glory of the Lord. That evening he attended the service held in the ancient Church of the Nativity, and which lasted from ten until three the next morning. He afterward wrote a letter to his Sunday school children in Philadelphia. No wonder they were devoted to their great-hearted leader! "I do not mind telling you (though of course I should not like to have you speak of it to any of the older people of the church) that I am much afraid the younger part

of my congregation has more than its share of my thoughts and interest."

"I cannot tell you how many Sunday mornings since I left you I have seemed to stand in the midst of our crowded schoolroom again, and look about and know every face and every class just as I used to; nor how many times I have heard one of our home hymns ringing very strangely and sweetly through the different music of some far-off country. I remember especially on Christmas eve, when I was standing in the old church in Bethlehem, close to the spot where Jesus was born, when the whole church was ringing hour after hour with the splendid hymns of praise to God, how again and again it seemed as if I could hear voices that I knew well, telling each other of the 'Wonderful Night' of the Saviour's birth, as I had heard them a year before."

All this while the words of a new carol were singing in his heart, but it was not till he came home to America that he wrote them down. This carol—"O little town of Bethlehem"—was first sung at Phillips Brooks' church as a part of the Sunday school Christmas service of 1868. The music for it was written, at Mr. Brooks' request, by Mr. Lewis H. Redner, who was organist of the church and also a teacher in the school. Nothing more perfectly suited to the words could

have been composed than this tune "St. Louis." Singularly enough, however, more than twenty years passed before the carol received anything like general recognition. But to-day it has an established and well-merited place in the hymn books of the English-speaking world. We give it in its original form, with five stanzas, the fourth being afterward omitted by the author:

"O little town of Bethlehem
How still we see thee lie;
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
The silent stars go by:
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
The everlasting Light;
The hopes and fears of all the years
Are met in thee to-night.

"For Christ is born of Mary,
And gathered all above,
While mortals sleep, the angels keep
Their watch of wondering love.
O morning stars, together
Proclaim the holy birth,
And praises sing to God the King,
And peace to men on earth!

"How silently, how silently,
The wondrous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts
The blessings of his heaven.
No ear may hear his coming,
But in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive him still,
The dear Christ enters in.

"Where children, pure and happy,
Pray to the Blessed Child;
Where misery cries out to thee,
Son of the Mother mild;
Where charity stands watching,
And faith holds wide the door,
The dark night wakes, the glory breaks,
And Christmas comes once more.

"O holy Child of Bethlehem!
Descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin, and enter in,
Be born in us to-day.
We hear the Christmas angels
The great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us,
Our Lord Emmanuel." [1]

The morning after this great-hearted lover of the Christ-Child went Home, the mother of a little girl of five, who had been one of his special favorites, entered the room where the child was playing, and holding the little face between her hands, said tearfully, "Bishop Brooks has gone to heaven." "Oh Mamma," was the reply, "how happy the angels will be!"

William Croswell Doane

1832–1913

In a preceding chapter we have spoken of Bishop George Washington Doane and the hymns he wrote. His son, William Croswell

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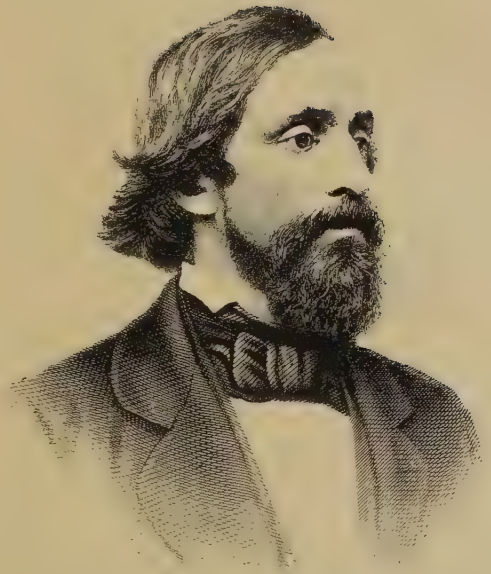
Doane, born in 1832, also entered the ministry of the Protestant Episcopal Church and became a distinguished prelate, being bishop of Albany from 1869 till his death in 1913. He has left us addresses and sermons and a few poems, but only one hymn which has come into general use. In 1886, when the bicentenary of the City of Albany was to be celebrated, Bishop Doane was requested to write a hymn which could be sung on the occasion. He did so, and it was a production of such unusual merit that it has been welcomed into the hymnody of the church at large. It is a noble ascription of praise to the Triune God, and in the hymnals it naturally comes in the section on "The Trinity," but it is also adapted to times of national thanksgiving. It includes five stanzas; we quote the first and the last:

"Ancient of days, who sittest throned in glory;
To thee all knees are bent, all voices pray;
Thy love has blest the wide world's wondrous story
With light and life since Eden's dawning day.

"O Triune God, with heart and voice adoring,
Praise we the goodness that doth crown our days;
Pray we, that thou wilt hear us, still imploring
Thy love and favor, kept to us always."

SAMUEL LONGFELLOW



SAMUEL JOHNSON

CHAPTER XX

LONGFELLOW, JOHNSON

Samuel Longfellow

1819–1892

It has often been regretfully noted that so many great poets have rarely employed their talents in the writing of hymns. This has been truer in England than in our own country. But even a casual review of our leading collections shows that the large majority of American hymns are by writers who made very little claim to be poets. What Henry Wadsworth Longfellow might have done had he turned his attention in this direction, we do not know. It was a task that never appealed to him. But happily he had a brother, Samuel, who possessed the true poetic instinct, and who has given us some of our finest and most widely used hymns.

Samuel Longfellow, the youngest in the family, was born in Portland, Maine, in 1819, twelve years after Henry. He graduated from Harvard, and later, in 1846, completed the divinity course. He was highly thought of by the students, especially for his literary gifts, and he was frequently called on to write songs for various college functions. While still an undergraduate in theology, he, in conjunction with his classmate

and bosom friend, Samuel Johnson, prepared a new hymn book for Unitarian Churches. It was a notable production, especially for its poetical quality. The young men searched far and wide for the very best. "Lead, Kindly Light," clipped from a newspaper, was included, though the editors were ignorant as to the author. "Nearer, my God, to Thee," which had but recently been introduced into America, also found a place. Hymns by Whittier, Sears, Mrs. Stowe, Emerson, Lowell, and others, almost unknown in public worship, were printed in the new book.

In the revision of 1848, Mr. Longfellow's own hymn on "Love," widely used at the present day, was also included. It was written before his later religious views were fully developed:

"Beneath the shadow of the cross,
As earthly hopes remove,
His new commandment Jesus gives,
His blessed word of love.

"O bond of union, strong and deep!
O bond of perfect peace!
Not e'en the lifted cross can harm,
If we but hold to this.

"Then, Jesus, be thy spirit ours,
And swift our feet shall move
To deeds of pure self-sacrifice,
And the sweet tasks of love."

While pastor of the Second Unitarian Church in Brooklyn, 1853-1860, he became a pioneer in

instituting a Vesper Service, which grew in popularity in other denominations as well as his own. For use, primarily, at the Second Church, he prepared a small collection of *Vespers,* in which he included his own hymn, now so widely sung:

"Again as evening's shadow falls,
We gather in these hallowed walls;
And vesper hymn and vesper prayer
Rise mingling on the holy air."

In the same little volume appeared his other vesper hymn, less familiar but scarcely less beautiful:

"Now on land and sea descending,
Brings the night its peace profound;
Let our vesper hymn be blending
With the holy calm around.
Soon as dies the sunset glory,
Stars of heaven shine out above,
Telling still the ancient story—
Their Creator's changeless love.

"Now our wants and burdens leaving
To his care, who cares for all,
Cease we fearing, cease we grieving;
At his touch our burdens fall.
As the darkness deepens o'er us,
Lo! eternal stars arise;
Hope and Faith and Love rise glorious,
Shining in the spirit's skies."

In 1864 Mr. Longfellow and Mr. Johnson published another collection, the *Hymns of the Spirit.* Longfellow was reared in a mild Uni-

tarianism, but he steadily drifted till he became a pure theist, rejecting all sectarian names, even Unitarian. So intense were his convictions that he refused a place in the new book to the exquisite "Christ to the young man said," the hymn especially written for his ordination by his brother, because "he would not by that one name disturb the simplicity of his faith in the one Source of the soul's higher life." He held Jesus as a human teacher in high and loving regard, but he insisted that the Divine Spirit alone should be the object of man's devotion. One of his most characteristic and widely used hymns is entitled, "Prayer for Inspiration":

"Holy Spirit, Truth Divine,
Dawn upon this soul of mine;
Word of God and inward Light,
Wake my spirit, clear my sight.

"Holy Spirit, Love Divine,
Glow within this heart of mine;
Kindle every high desire;
Perish self in thy pure fire!

"Holy Spirit, Power Divine,
Fill and nerve this will of mine;
By thee may I strongly live,
Bravely bear, and nobly strive.

"Holy Spirit, Right Divine,
King within my conscience reign;
Be my Law, and I shall be
Firmly bound, forever free.

"Holy Spirit, Peace Divine,
Still this restless heart of mine;
Speak to calm this tossing sea,
Stayed in thy tranquillity.

"Holy Spirit, Joy Divine,
Gladden thou this heart of mine;
In the desert ways I sing,
'Spring, O Well, for every spring.' "

All through life Samuel Longfellow was so overshadowed by the fame of his distinguished brother, that his natural disposition to self-distrust was intensified. But those who knew him admired the simplicity, the sweetness, and the quiet serenity of his character, and his utter devotion to what he believed to be the truth. Partly on account of poor health, his pastoral relationships were intermittent. The last church that he served was the Unitarian at Germantown, Philadelphia. While here, at the opening of 1882, his close friend of many years, Samuel Johnson, died, and a few weeks later his brother Henry was taken. He felt the double blow deeply, but his spiritual serenity was not shaken. Returning to his pulpit on the Sunday following his brother's funeral, he said: "I bring to you a message from the chamber of death and from the gateway of the tomb. And that message is Life, Life immortal, Life uninterrupted, unarrested, not cut off."

It is a tribute to the genuine spirituality of the man, that so many hymns by Samuel Longfellow are in use to-day in our evangelical churches. The one with the caption, "They looked unto Him, and were lightened," is a bit of autobiography. It was the special favorite of the author, and it has a wide circulation:

"I look to thee in every need,
And never look in vain;
I feel thy strong and tender love,
And all is well again:
The thought of thee is mightier far
Than sin and pain and sorrow are.

"Discouraged in the work of life,
Disheartened by its load,
Shamed by its failures or its fears,
I sink beside the road;
But let me only think of thee,
And then new heart springs up in me.

"Thy calmness bends serene above,
My restlessness to still;
Around me flows thy quickening life,
To nerve my faltering will:
Thy presence fills my solitude;
Thy providence turns all to good.

"Embosomed deep in thy dear love,
Held in thy law, I stand;
Thy hand in all things I behold,
And all things in thy hand;
Thou leadest me by unsought ways,
And turn'st my mourning into praise."

Samuel Johnson
1822–1882

Samuel Johnson was deeply religious, as his hymns clearly show, but his religion was of the theistic type. He is often spoken of as a Unitarian, but the Unitarians were altogether too narrow for him. He never united with any ecclesiastical body; he delighted in the widest possible freedom. One of his friends said of him that he was "the apostle of individualism." "He would not belong to any church, or subscribe to any creed, or connect himself with any sect, or be a member of any organization whatever," however sympathetic with its aims he might be. But in spite of these peculiarities, the church recognizes his genuine spiritual vision by gratefully receiving some of his sacred poems into her hymnals.

Born in Salem, Massachusetts, in 1822, graduating from Harvard College and from the Divinity School, he established an Independent Church at Lynn which he served as pastor till 1870. He then returned to Salem, where he gave himself chiefly to literary work, till his death in 1882.

From his early manhood he was interested in hymnology, from time to time adding choice pieces from his own pen to the general stock. Reference has already been made to the two

hymn books, radical in theology but of literary merit, which he published in cooperation with Samuel Longfellow. Poems of his own appeared in both collections. Probably the best hymn that he ever composed, and one that nearly all denominations have been glad to appropriate, is the one written in 1860, entitled, "The City of God." Its exalted vision, reminding us of the glories that John beheld, and its triumphant faith in the future of the Kingdom, give it an unusual appeal:

"City of God, how broad and far
Outspread thy walls sublime!
The true thy chartered freemen are,
Of every age and clime.

"One holy church, one army strong,
One steadfast high intent,
One working band, one harvest song,
One King omnipotent!

"How purely hath thy speech come down
From man's primeval youth!
How grandly hath thine empire grown
Of freedom, love, and truth!

"How gleam thy watch fires through the night,
With never-fainting ray!
How rise thy towers, serene and bright,
To meet the dawning day!

"In vain the surge's angry shock,
In vain the drifting sands;
Unharmed upon the eternal Rock,
The eternal city stands."

Dorothea L. Dix, who devoted her life to alleviating the condition of the insane, paupers, prisoners, and other unfortunates, appealed on one occasion to Mr. Johnson to contribute a hymn to a collection she was preparing for use in an asylum. The poem he sent her has strengthened many hearts beyond the circle for which it was originally intended:

"I bless thee, Lord, for sorrows sent
To break my dream of human power;
For now my shallow cistern's spent,
I find thy founts, and thirst no more.

"I take thy hand, and fears grow still;
Behold thy face, and doubts remove;
Who would not yield his wavering will
To perfect Truth and boundless Love?

"That love this restless soul doth teach
The strength of thine eternal calm;
And tune its sad and broken speech
To join, on earth, the angels' psalm.

"O be it patient in thy hands,
And drawn, through each mysterious hour,
To service of thy pure commands,
The narrow way to Love and Power."

CHAPTER XXI

FANNY CROSBY, MRS. PRENTISS

Frances Crosby Van Alstyne
(Fanny Crosby)

1820–1915

Of all our American hymn writers, there never has been one more thoroughly lovable than Mrs. Van Alstyne, or Fanny Crosby, as she is familiarly known. None would claim that she was a poetess in any large sense. Her hymns (which might, perhaps, be more appropriately discussed under the head of "Gospel Songs") have been severely criticised. Dr. Julian, the editor of the *Dictionary of Hymnology,* says that "they are, with few exceptions, very weak and poor," and others insist that they are "crudely sentimental." Some hymn books will give them no place whatever. And yet, on the other hand, Dr. Duffield, author of *English Hymns,* wrote to his publishers shortly before his death, "I rather think her talent will stand beside that of Watts or Wesley, especially if we take into consideration the number of hymns she has written."

If the worth of a hymn is to be determined solely by certain canons of excellence laid down by hymn-critics, probably few of Fanny Crosby's would meet the test. But if other consid-

FANNY J. CROSBY

ELIZABETH PAYSON PRENTISS

erations also enter in, the verdict may be different. Her productions, in her own and in the various languages into which they have been translated, are probably sung by more voices than those of any other writer, save Isaac Watts and Charles Wesley. At least seventy are in common use in England, a far greater number than by any other American.

How many souls have been led to Christ through her hymns, God only knows, but undoubtedly there has been a host. She prayed that she might be instrumental in saving a million men; may it not be that the prayer has been or will be answered? Her total production was prodigious, numbering scarcely less than eight thousand songs and hymns. For years she was under engagement with Biglow and Main to furnish them regularly three songs a week. No doubt if she had written far less and written better, it would have been a gain, but her habit of throwing her thoughts into rhyme was spontaneous, as natural as breathing. The astonishing fact is not that she gave forth so much of small value, but that so many of her hymns have found lodgment in the affections of vast multitudes of Christians of various faiths, and are sung to-day with joy and blessing the world around.

Fanny Crosby was born of humble parents, in Southeast, Putnam County, New York, on

March 24, 1820. Through an ignorant application of a poultice to her eyes when she was six weeks old, her sight was forever destroyed. And yet during all her life she was amazingly independent in finding her way about. Indeed, she would scarcely have realized that she was blind had not people constantly reminded her of the fact. Her affliction never made her gloomy. When she was eight years old she wrote the cheerful ditty:

"O what a happy soul am I!
Although I cannot see,
I am resolved that in this world
Contented I will be.

"How many blessings I enjoy,
That other people don't,
To weep and sigh because I'm blind,
I cannot and I won't."

At the age of fifteen she entered the Institution for the Blind in New York City, remaining there as pupil and afterward as teacher for twenty-three years. It was soon recognized that the girl was unusually gifted, especially in the use of her pen. It became quite the custom on state occasions to put her forward to recite one of her poems. In 1843 several of the pupils went to Washington seeking to enlist the sympathy of Congress on behalf of the blind. At the insistent request of the members, Fanny recited a number

of her poems, moving many to tears by her simple eloquence.

Though she had grown up with a strong religious bent, she entered into a more definite experience in 1851, and at that time united with the old John Street Methodist Episcopal Church of New York. Seven years later she was married to Mr. Alexander Van Alstyne. He was a teacher in the same school, and like herself he was blind. As the author of hymns, however, she always retained her maiden name.

While at the institution she wrote a number of secular songs, especially for the popular tunes composed by George F. Root, who for a time was an instructor at the school. In this way she contributed the title and the words for the well-known "There's Music in the Air." But she was not contented, for she had not yet found her life work. She left the institution which for so long had been her home in 1858. It was about this time that she met Mr. W. B. Bradbury, and at his request she wrote a sacred song—her first:

"We are going, we are going,
To a home beyond the skies,
Where the fields are robed in beauty,
And the sunlight never dies.

"We are going, we are going,
And the music we have heard,
Like the echo of the woodland,
Or the carol of the bird."

She afterward said, "I had found my mission, and was the happiest creature in all the land." To the close of her long life she was devoted to the one task of hymn-writing. As we would naturally expect with one who was shut away from much that was passing in the outside world, her hymns are the outgrowth of her own experience, and to an unusual extent reflect the changing phases of that experience. Indeed, it would not be difficult from a simple study of these hymns to write her spiritual biography. Her unfailing cheerfulness, her childlike trust in the divine watchcare over her own life, enabled her to say to others:

"God will take care of you, be not afraid,
He is your safeguard through sunshine and shade;
Tenderly watching, and keeping his own,
He will not leave you to wander alone."

Such hymns as: "Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine," "Jesus, keep me near the Cross," "Saviour, more than life to me," and many others equally well known, were born in her own heart-life.

Fanny Crosby was deeply interested in gospel work for men, especially among the poor fellows who were down but not out. "You can't save a man by telling him of his sins," she used to say. "He knows them already. Tell him there is pardon and love waiting for him." In his admirable

Story of Ninety-Four Years, the Rev. S. Trevena Jackson gives the account of how "Rescue the Perishing" came to be written, as he received it from the lips of Fanny Crosby. "It was written in the year 1869, when I was forty-nine years old. Many of my hymns were written after experiences in New York mission work. This one was thus written. I was addressing a large company of working men one hot summer evening, when the thought kept forcing itself on my mind that some mother's boy must be rescued that night or not at all. So I made a pressing plea that if there was a boy present who had wandered from his mother's home and teaching, he would come to me at the close of the service. A young man of eighteen came forward and said, 'Did you mean me? I promised my mother to meet her in heaven, but as I am now living that will be impossible.' We prayed for him and he finally arose with a new light in his eyes and exclaimed in triumph, 'Now I can meet my mother in heaven, for I have found God!'

"A few days before, Mr. Doane, the musical composer, had sent me the subject, 'Rescue the Perishing,' and while I sat there that evening, the line came to me, 'Rescue the Perishing, care for the dying.' I could think of nothing else that night. When I arrived home I went to work on the hymn at once, and before I retired it was

ready for the melody. The next day my song was written out and forwarded to Mr. Doane, who wrote the beautiful and touching music as it now stands to my hymn."

"Rescue the perishing,
Care for the dying,
Snatch them in pity from sin and the grave;
Weep o'er the erring one,
Lift up the fallen,
Tell them of Jesus the mighty to save."

The great meetings held by Moody and Sankey gave wings to Fanny Crosby's hymns both in England and America. On the other side of the sea, in particular, where more conservative tastes had prevailed, these warm-hearted songs with their simple, pleasing melodies, were a revelation, and they awakened a popular enthusiasm which is felt to this day.

Of all her hymns, Fanny Crosby's own favorite was "Safe in the arms of Jesus," and the general verdict agrees with her. One day in 1868, Mr. Doane said to her, "Fanny, I have a tune I would like to have you write words for." He played it over and she exclaimed, "That says 'Safe in the arms of Jesus!' " She went to her room, and in half an hour the hymn was finished. It has gone everywhere; it knows no limitations of race or sect. It is sung in many languages, and at funerals in Roman Catholic as well as in

Protestant churches. Multitudes who never heard of Fanny Crosby know and love this song. The Rev. Mr. Jackson was taking her to his home for a visit: "Our hackman listened to his passenger with close attention, and when I informed him that she was Fanny Crosby, who had written 'Safe in the arms of Jesus,' he took off his hat and wept. He called a policeman and said, 'This is Miss Fanny Crosby, who wrote 'Safe in the arms of Jesus.' I want you to help this young man to get her safely to the train.' 'I sure will,' said the policeman. Then, quite sadly, he added, 'We sang that hymn at my little girl's funeral last week.' Aunt Fanny took the policeman's arm and said, 'I call all the policemen and railroad men "my boys." They take such good care of me wherever I go.' The officer assisted her with the greatest care and as she took her seat in the train she said to him, 'God bless your dear heart. You shall have my prayers. Tell your dear wife that your little daughter is safe in the arms of Jesus.' The great strong policeman turned away wiping the tears from his eyes."

It is fortunate that from the first this beautiful hymn has been wedded to a melody of peculiar sweetness and one so perfectly suited to the tender pathos of the words. At many public obsequies, notably at Grant's funeral, the tune has been a favorite with the bands.

Frances Ridley Havergal and Fanny Crosby never met, but each was an ardent admirer of the other, and no message that Miss Crosby ever received was treasured more highly than these lines from Miss Havergal:

"Dear blind sister over the sea,
An English heart goes forth to thee.
We are linked by a cable of faith and song
Flashing bright sympathy swift along:
One in the East and one in the West
Singing for Him whom our souls love best;
'Singing for Jesus,' telling his love
All the way to our home above,
Where the severing sea, with its restless tide,
Never shall hinder and never divide.
Sister! What shall our meeting be,
When our hearts shall sing, and our eyes shall see!"

One summer Fanny Crosby was visiting at Northfield. At an evening gathering when she with others was on the platform, several had spoken of their Christian experience, and presently Mr. Moody turned to Miss Crosby, "Now we want a word from you." For a moment she hesitated, but when he pressed her she quietly arose and said: "There is one hymn I have written which has never been published. I call it my Soul's poem, and sometimes when I am troubled I repeat it to myself, for it brings comfort to my heart." And she recited the lines which have since become so familiar:

"Some day the silver cord will break,
And I no more as now shall sing:
But, O the joy when I awake
Within the palace of the King!
And I shall see him face to face,
And tell the story—Saved by Grace."

Those who were present and saw Miss Crosby, her uplifted face with those sightless orbs marked by a strange wistfulness, will never forget the pathetic emphasis of the refrain,

"And I shall see him face to face!"

It was on Friday morning, February 12, 1915, on the threshold of her ninety-fifth birthday, that the yearning of her heart was gratified and she saw Him face to face.

Elizabeth Prentiss
1818–1878

The hymn, "More love to thee, O Christ," could have been written only by one who had entered into unusually close fellowship with the Lord Jesus. Mrs. Prentiss was the daughter of Edward Payson, one of the most gifted and one of the saintliest men that the American ministry has ever known. In such reverence was his memory held that for years after his death his name was given to so many children in baptism that at one time there were "hundreds if not thousands" of Edward Paysons.

The daughter Elizabeth, born in 1818, inherited many of the characteristics of her father, and even as a young woman she enjoyed a remarkable religious experience. She married the Rev. George L. Prentiss, who for some years was a pastor in the Presbyterian Church, and later became a professor in the Union Theological Seminary of New York. Dr. Theodore L. Cuyler, who was a frequent visitor in the home, describes Mrs. Prentiss as "a very bright-eyed little woman, with a keen sense of humor, who cared more to shine in her own happy household than in a wide circle of society."

She was a lifelong invalid. Even as a child she never knew what it was to feel well, and the following years brought no relief. Chronic insomnia led to the most intense suffering in both body and mind, but in spite of it all she did a great work. All who met her commented on her radiant Christian life, but few knew the toilsome road she had traveled. As she once said, "Much of my experience of life has cost me a great price and I wish to use it for strengthening and comforting other souls"; and so she wrote *Stepping Heavenward,* to cheer and help younger pilgrims.

As we listen to her life-story, we cannot help wondering if the Master ever had a more devoted disciple than Elizabeth Prentiss. He was the center of her being. Her thoughts, her conver-

sations, her familiar letters, all her writings, were full of Christ. In her volume of one hundred and twenty-three *Religious Poems,* more than a hundred are addressed to him or have to do with his ministry. After her death they found on the flyleaf of one of her favorite books these lines, which are only an example of what she was often writing:

"One hour with Jesus! How its peace outweighs
The ravishment of earthly love and praise;
How dearer far, emptied of self to lie
Low at his feet, and catch, perchance, his eye,
Alike content when he may give or take,
The sweet, the bitter, welcome for his sake!"

Love to Christ was the keynote of her life. "To love Christ more," she said, " is the deepest need, the constant cry of my soul. . . . Out in the woods, and on my bed, and out driving, when I am happy and busy, and when I am sad and idle, the whisper keeps going up for more love, more love, more love!" One of her most beautiful poems, and one meriting a place in our hymn books, is entitled, "Christ's Invitation." Like most of her compositions, it is undated, but it seems to have been written prior to "More Love to Thee, O Christ," and the two may be linked together, the one as the Master's call, the other as the disciple's response. Both are written in the same meter:

"Press close, my child to me,
Closer to me;
Earth hath no resting place
Ready for thee!
Straight to my shelter flee,
Press close, my child, to me,
Closer to me!

"Love, pleasure, riches, fame,
All may be thine,
And the immortal soul
Still will repine;
I must be all to thee,
Press close, my child, to me,
Closer to me!

"Life may for thee contend,
Hard toil and care
Strive to divide from me,
Crowd everywhere;
Let them my servants be—
Press thou, my child, to me,
Closer to me!

"Grief of thy heart may make
A desert drear,
Yet there my suff'rers learn
My voice to hear,
Calling with earnest plea,
Press close, my child, to me,
Closer to me!

"Come, then, my child, to me,
Make thyself mine;
I give myself to thee,
I will be thine.

Joy, grief and care shall be
Thus binding thee to me,
Closer to me!"

The year 1856, in the life of Mrs. Prentiss, was overshadowed by clouds of anxiety and distress. It was a time of great bodily suffering and she was likewise passing through sharp spiritual conflicts. Her best-known hymn, "More Love to Thee, O Christ," written in this year, reflects in a number of its lines the experience of those trying days. Dr. Prentiss says of it: "Like most of her hymns, it is simply a prayer put into the form of verse. She wrote it so hastily that the last stanza was left incomplete, one line having been added in pencil when it was printed. She did not show it, not even to her husband, until many years after it was written; and she wondered not a little that, when published, it met with so much favor."

It is sung to-day wherever the English language is spoken, and it has been translated into foreign tongues, including the Arabic and Chinese. On that beautiful day in August, 1878, just as the sun was setting, when a company of friends were gathered about the open grave of this sainted woman, it was very fitting that at the close of the service they should sing this hymn, which was not only the supreme cry of her own soul, but which has voiced the eager

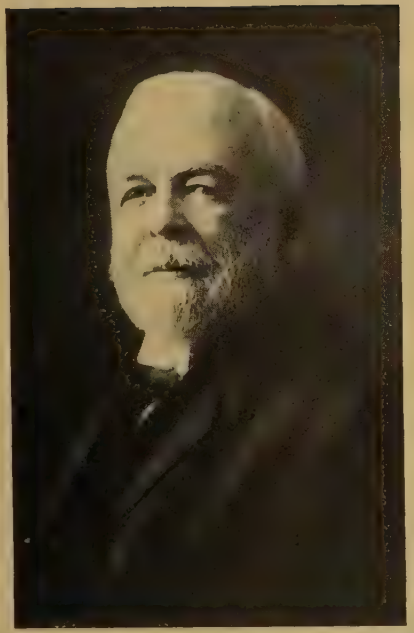
yearning of an unnumbered multitude of fellow-disciples:

"More love to thee, O Christ,
More love to thee!
Hear thou the prayer I make,
On bended knee;
This is my earnest plea,
More love, O Christ, to thee,
More love to thee!

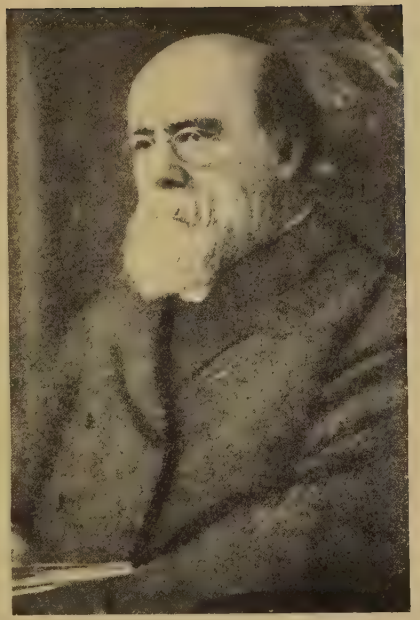
"Once earthly joy I craved,
Sought peace and rest;
Now thee alone I seek,
Give what is best;
This all my prayer shall be,
More love, O Christ, to thee,
More love to thee!

"Let sorrow do its work,
Send grief and pain;
Sweet are thy messengers,
Sweet their refrain,
When they can sing with me,
More love, O Christ, to thee,
More love to thee!

"Then shall my latest breath
Whisper thy praise;
This is the parting cry
My heart shall raise,
This still its prayer shall be,
More love, O Christ, to thee,
More love to thee!"



JOSEPH HENRY GILMORE



WASHINGTON GLADDEN

MALTBIE DAVENPORT BABCOCK

CHAPTER XXII

HUNTER, EVEREST, WOLCOTT, MARCH, PHELPS, HOPPER, MRS. SLADE, MRS. THOMSON, GILMORE, GLADDEN, BABCOCK, SHURTLEFF

William Hunter

1811–1877

"My heavenly home is bright and fair:
Nor pain nor death can enter there;
Its glittering towers the sun outshine;
That heavenly mansion shall be mine."

This well-loved hymn, which for so many years multitudes of pilgrims to the City of the Great King have been singing with joyous hearts, was written in 1838. The author, Rev. William Hunter, D.D., was born in Ireland in 1811. He came to this country as a youth, entered the Methodist Episcopal ministry, taught for a time in Alleghany College, and for some years was editor of the *Pittsburgh Christian Advocate*. He wrote many hymns, though this is the only one now in use. He was a member of the committee of twelve appointed by the General Conference of 1876 to revise the Church Hymnal, and he lived to practically complete

his part of the task, passing to the heavenly home in October, 1877.

Charles William Everest

1814–1877

There are several interesting facts connected with the hymn, " 'Take up thy cross,' the Saviour said."

It was written by a nineteen-year-old boy, before he entered college; it found its way to England, where it met with great favor; it was welcomed to most English hymnals, being one of the very few American productions to be admitted to *Hymns Ancient and Modern;* and while Britons refer to it as "a beautiful American hymn," it has had far less recognition in the land of its birth, though without question possessing high merit.

The author, Rev. Charles W. Everest, was born at East Windsor, Connecticut, in 1814. He graduated from Trinity College, Hartford, in 1838, and entering the ministry of the Protestant Episcopal Church, he was placed in charge of a parish near New Haven, where he remained for thirty-one years, also conducting a rectory school most of the time. The hymn to which we have referred was first published in 1833 in a small volume entitled, *Visions of Death, and Other Poems.* Various alterations have been intro-

duced since then. The hymn in its original form, with the five stanzas, is as follows:

" 'Take up thy cross,' the Saviour said,
'If thou wouldst my disciple be;
Take up thy cross with willing heart,
And humbly follow after me.'

"Take up thy cross; let not its weight
Fill thy weak soul with vain alarm;
His strength shall bear thy spirit up,
And brace thy heart and nerve thine arm.

"Take up thy cross, nor heed the shame;
And let thy foolish pride be still;
Thy Lord refused not e'en to die
Upon a cross on Calvary's hill.

"Take up thy cross, then, in his strength,
And calmly sin's wild deluge brave;
'Twill guide thee to a better home,
It points to glory o'er the grave.

"Take up thy cross, and follow on,
Nor think till death to lay it down;
For only he who bears the cross
May hope to wear the glorious crown."

Samuel Wolcott

1813–1886

Samuel Wolcott had passed his fifty-fifth birthday before he wrote a line of poetry. He supposed that the making of a hymn was as far beyond him as the working of a miracle. But one day he was suddenly impelled to experiment. To his utter amazement he succeeded, and during

the next few years he composed more than two hundred hymns.

In 1869, while he was pastor of the Plymouth Congregational Church in Cleveland, the Young Men's Christian Associations of Ohio met in the city. Directly over the platform, in letters of evergreen, were the words, "Christ for the World, and the World for Christ." Probably no one in the convention was stirred by the motto as was Dr. Wolcott. As a young man he himself had been a foreign missionary. Because of ill health he had been compelled to return to America, but his soul burned with evangelistic zeal. He had written only one hymn in his life, but now he was inspired to try again. Of how well he succeeded, the whole church is a grateful witness, for the fruit of his effort was this noble missionary lyric:

"Christ for the world we sing;
The world to Christ we bring
With loving zeal;
The poor and them that mourn,
The faint and overborne,
Sin-sick and sorrow-worn,
Whom Christ doth heal.

"Christ for the world we sing;
The world to Christ we bring
With fervent prayer:
The wayward and the lost,
By restless passions tossed,
Redeemed at countless cost
From dark despair.

"Christ for the world we sing;
The world to Christ we bring
With one accord;
With us the work to share,
With us reproach to dare,
With us the cross to bear,
For Christ our Lord.

"Christ for the world we sing;
The world to Christ we bring
With joyful song;
The newborn souls, whose days
Reclaimed from error's ways,
Inspired with hope and praise,
To Christ belong."

It will be noticed that this hymn is as well adapted to Home as to Foreign Missions. Dr. Wolcott refused to make any distinction. In the fullest and the broadest sense he was committed to World Evangelization.

Daniel March
1816–1909

"Hark, the voice of Jesus calling,
'Who will go and work to-day?
Fields are white, and harvests waiting,
Who will bear the sheaves away?'
Loud and long the Master calleth,
Rich reward he offers free;
Who will answer, gladly saying,
'Here am I, send me, send me'?"

Rev. Daniel March, D.D., who wrote the hymn opening with this stanza, was born in Millbury, Massachusetts, in 1816. He entered the

ministry and served several Presbyterian and Congregational churches. So far as we have any record this is his only hymn, and its writing came about in a peculiar way. Many of our best hymns are the response to a sudden impulse, and were composed almost as swiftly as the pen could glide over the paper. Dr. Nutter's *Hymn Studies* has this note: "In 1868 the author [Dr. March] was a pastor in Philadelphia. On the 18th of October he was to preach to the Christian Association of that city. At a late hour he learned that one of the hymns selected was not suitable. His text was, 'Here am I; send me.' In 'great haste,' he says, he wrote the hymn, and it was sung from the manuscript."

Little did the preacher think that his carefully prepared sermon would soon be forgotten, but that the fugitive song, product of the passing moment, would live on through the years, to be sung by multitudes then unborn, inspiring many to do their best in the service of the Master.

Sylvanus Dryden Phelps

1816–1895

On his seventieth birthday, May 15, 1886, Dr. Phelps received a note of congratulation from Dr. Robert Lowry, the well-known hymn-writer, which read: "It is worth living seventy years even if nothing comes of it but one such hymn as,

'Saviour! thy dying love
Thou gavest me;
Nor should I aught withhold,
Dear Lord, from thee.'

"Happy is the man who can produce one song which the world will keep on singing after its author shall have passed away."

Dr. Phelps made a notable record in the Baptist ministry, serving as pastor of the First Baptist Church of New Haven for twenty-eight years. He traveled extensively and wrote many books. He composed a number of hymns, but only the one referred to above has come into general use. It long since gained wide popularity in our own land, and it has been translated into foreign languages. In his old age the author's heart was gladdened by the messages constantly reaching him from near and distant parts, telling of the good that his hymn had done; of the Christians it had inspired to seek a larger spiritual experience, and of the many whom it had been directly instrumental in leading to Christ.

Edward Hopper
1818–1888

"Jesus, Saviour, pilot me
Over life's tempestuous sea;
Unknown waves before me roll,
Hiding rock and treacherous shoal;
Chart and compass came from thee;
Jesus, Saviour, pilot me."

It was a heavenly, though unhappily, not an abiding, inspiration that gave to the world this beautiful hymn. In its original form it had six stanzas, of which only the first, fifth, and sixth have been retained in common use.

Dr. Hopper wrote many other hymns, but they have not lived. Three stanzas are his total contribution to the hymnody of the church, but it is a contribution of such solid and enduring worth that Christians far and wide hold him in grateful remembrance. He was born in New York City in 1818, entered the Presbyterian ministry, and after serving churches elsewhere returned to New York in 1870, where he became pastor of the Church of the Sea and Land, remaining there till his death in 1888. His work among the seafarers was notably successful, many sailors attending his services. The same gospel that he preached to the mariners is sung in his well-known hymn. The end of his life came suddenly. He was found dead, sitting in his study-chair, pencil in hand. On the sheet before him were some freshly written lines on "Heaven," the last subject that engaged his thought.

MARY B. C. SLADE
1826–1882

MARY ANN THOMSON
1834–

Two of our most popular missionary hymns are from the pens of women:

"From all the dark places
Of earth's heathen races,
O see how the thick shadows fly!"

and

"O Zion, haste, thy mission high fulfilling,
To tell to all the world that God is Light."

The first was written by Mrs. Slade, whose husband was a pastor in Fall River, Massachusetts. Born in 1826, she died in 1882, being especially remembered as the editor for several years of the children's magazine, *Wide Awake*.

The second of these hymns is the work of Mrs. Mary Ann Thomson. She was born in London in 1834, and coming to America was married to Mr. John Thomson, who became the librarian of the Philadelphia Free Library. She wrote more than forty hymns altogether, several of which are in the collection of the Protestant Episcopal Church, of which she is a member. She is still living in Philadelphia, in a serene old age.

Both of these hymns have come into popular use not only by reason of their intrinsic merits, but also because they have been wedded to such stirring and melodious tunes that it has been a delight to sing them.

Joseph Henry Gilmore

1834–1918

To have written a hymn which has been translated into various foreign tongues and is sung

around the world, which has brought new trust and courage to the living and has strengthened the faith of the dying, is enough to give the author an assured place in the affection and gratitude of the Christian Church.

Joseph Henry Gilmore was born in Boston in 1834, graduated from Brown University at the head of his class, took a course in theology, for a time was private secretary to his father, Governor Gilmore of New Hampshire, served brief terms as pastor of Baptist churches, and in 1868 became the professor of English Literature in Rochester University. He remained there till his death in 1918.

He composed several hymns, but only one of any note. He has given us an account of how it came to be written. It was in the spring of 1862. "I had been talking, at the Wednesday evening lecture of the First Baptist Church [of Philadelphia], about the twenty-third Psalm, and had been especially impressed with the blessedness of being led by God, of the mere fact of his leadership, altogether apart from the way in which he led us and what he was leading us to." On returning to his place of entertainment the thought so grew upon him that he took out a pencil, wrote the hymn just as it stands to-day and handed it to his wife, thinking no more of it. "She sent it, without my knowledge, to the *Watchman and Re-*

flector, and there it first appeared in print. Three years later I went to Rochester, New York, to preach for the Second Baptist Church, . . . and on entering the chapel, I took up a hymn book, thinking, 'I wonder what they sing!' The book opened at 'He leadeth me,' and that was the first time I knew my hymn had found a place among the songs of the church." As sung to-day, the last two lines of the refrain are by another hand.

"He leadeth me! O blessed thought!
O words with heavenly comfort fraught!
Whate'er I do, where'er I be,
Still 'tis God's hand that leadeth me.
He leadeth me, he leadeth me,
By his own hand he leadeth me:
His faithful follower I would be,
For by his hand he leadeth me.

"Sometimes 'mid scenes of deepest gloom,
Sometimes where Eden's bowers bloom,
By waters still, o'er troubled sea,—
Still 'tis his hand that leadeth me!

"Lord, I would clasp thy hand in mine,
Nor ever murmur nor repine,
Content, whatever lot I see,
Since 'tis my God that leadeth me!

"And when my task on earth is done,
When, by thy grace, the victory's won,
E'en death's cold wave I will not flee,
Since God through Jordan leadeth me."

Washington Gladden

1836–1918

For a generation and more, scarcely a year passed that at least one volume did not come from the prolific pen of Washington Gladden. Valuable and widely read as these books were, most of them are already forgotten. But in 1879, never dreaming of what would come of it, he gave to the world a hymn which will live and which will keep him in grateful remembrance through many a year.

When an eminent Congregationalist was asked what his church had done for hymnology, he replied that he was "willing to rest its reputation on four hymns, not to mention more, namely: Timothy Dwight's 'I love thy Kingdom, Lord'; Ray Palmer's 'My faith looks up to thee'; Leonard Bacon's 'O God, beneath thy guiding hand'; and Washington Gladden's 'O Master, let me walk with thee.'" Surely a group of great hymns, nor is the last the least.

It was Dr. Gladden's lifelong boast that he was nothing but a preacher. Born in 1836, and graduated from Williams College in the class of '59, he entered the Congregational ministry and at once became pastor in Brooklyn. For several years he was on the editorial staff of the New York *Independent,* but he never abandoned the pulpit. In 1882 he began his pastorate of thirty-

two years in Columbus, Ohio, a career notable not only in the life of that city but far beyond. He was concerned with all phases of modern life, social and political as well as religious. He was abreast and more than abreast of his times. For fifty years he was an incessant student of our industrial problems. With his pen, and from the platform, as well as in immediate personal approach, he sought to bring employers and employees to a mutual understanding and to improve industrial relations.

He was a leader in broadening the popular conception of Christianity and in interpreting the old faith in terms of social service. If he made less of some of the dogmas of the church, he stressed what seemed to him the fundamentals. By many he was severely criticised; his views were condemned and sometimes misrepresented. But in spite of opposition he continued on his way. As we read his hymn we seem to catch a glimpse of the heart whence it came, of hopes that were already big, and of experiences that even then were trying. The poem first appeared in *Sunday Afternoon,* a magazine which Dr. Gladden was editing at the time. He had no thought that it would ever be used as a hymn. There were three eight-line stanzas, the second being omitted in our hymnals. As originally printed it is as follows:

"O Master, let me walk with thee
In lowly paths of service free;
Tell me thy secret; help me bear
The strain of toil, the fret of care.
Help me the slow of heart to move
By some clear, winning word of love;
Teach me the wayward feet to stay,
And guide them in the homeward way.

"O Master, let me walk with thee
Before the taunting Pharisee;
Help me to bear the sting of spite,
The hate of men who hide thy light,
The sore distrust of souls sincere
Who cannot read thy judgments clear,
The dullness of the multitude
Who dimly guess that thou art good.

"Teach me thy patience; still with thee
In closer, dearer company,
In work that keeps faith sweet and strong,
In trust that triumphs over wrong.
In hope that sends a shining ray
Far down the future's broadening way;
In peace that only thou canst give,
With thee, O Master, let me live."

The glad hopefulness of the closing lines was thoroughly characteristic of Dr. Gladden. In one of his later sermons he said: "I have never doubted that the kingdom I have always prayed for is coming; that the gospel I have always preached is true. I believe that the democracy is getting a new heart and a new spirit, that the nation is being saved."

Maltbie Davenport Babcock
1858–1901

A manlier man than Maltbie Davenport Babcock never stood in a Christian pulpit. He was born in Syracuse, New York, in 1858, and as a boy he began to show those qualities of sturdy independence and virile leadership which, in later years, made him such a power among men. He grew up, tall, broad-shouldered, with muscles of iron, a superb specimen of physical manhood. He was champion baseball pitcher and swimmer, and at the front in all athletic contests. The young men as well as the boys fairly idolized him, but they all knew where he stood. He was as full of fun and mischief as the next man, but some things he would not tolerate. One day when an older fellow was trying to bully one younger than himself, and was indulging in some unsavory language, Babcock quietly seized him by the nape of the neck and the seat of the trousers and with a word of forceful warning pitched him over the fence.

It was a stirring virility like this that marked his preaching. No wonder that men, old and young, thronged to hear him. During his pastorate in Baltimore he was easily the commanding figure in the Protestant pulpits of the city. So eagerly did the students seek his counsel, that the authorities of Johns Hopkins set aside a special

room for his use. He was in constant demand as university preacher all over the land, and no young man ever went to sleep while he was speaking. When he talked, as on "Power" or "Overcoming," in his perfectly frank, straightforward way—no trace of clerical mannerism—his message fairly quivered with redblooded earnestness; the young men saw the splendor of life, they felt the glory of self-mastery, and many a fellow went out vowing to himself, "With God's help I'll be a man!"

In his militant hatred of wrong and his passionate love for the strong and true and manly, Dr. Babcock was a leader among men. He once said: "There is a making the best of things that is noble. . . . But there is a making the best of things that is false and shameful. It is labeling that as best which we deeply know is not the best. It is cowardly contentment. It is 'letting things go,' in weak complaisance, or shallow optimism, when they could be bettered, if we cared to better them." That noble poem, "Be Strong!" which Bishop Warren called "a rugged hymn, knotted like the muscles of a torso of Hercules," is thoroughly characteristic of the man:

"Be strong!
We are not here to play, to dream, to drift,
We have hard work to do, and loads to lift.
Shun not the struggle; face it. 'Tis God's gift.

"Be strong!
Say not the days are evil—who's to blame?
And fold the hands and acquiesce—O shame!
Stand up, speak out, and bravely—in God's name.

"Be strong!
It matters not how deep intrenched the wrong,
How hard the battle goes, the day, how long.
Faint not, fight on! To-morrow comes the song."[1]

Maltbie D. Babcock was not only strong to act; he went farther; he was strong to trust. He learned the secret revealed only to the mighty of soul; he knew how to rest in the Lord. He used to say: "Anxiety has no place in the life of one of God's children. Christ's serenity was one of the most unmistakable signs of his filial trust. He was tired and hungry and thirsty and in pain; but we cannot imagine him anxious or fretful. His mind was kept in perfect peace because it was stayed on God. The life lived by the faith of the Son of God will find his word kept: 'My peace give I unto you.' " It was this robust faith in God, at once childlike and manly, that inspired the writing of that hymn which we delight to sing:

"Rest in the Lord, my soul;
Commit to him thy way.
What to thy sight seems dark as night,
To him is bright as day.

[1] From "Thoughts for Every-Day Living"; copyright, 1901, by Charles Scribner's Sons.

"Rest in the Lord, my soul;
He planned for thee thy life,
Brings fruit from rain, brings good from pain,
And peace and joy from strife.

"Rest in the Lord, my soul;
This fretting weakens thee.
Why not be still? Accept his will;
Thou shalt his glory see."[1]

As would be expected of such a man, Dr. Babcock was a genuine lover of nature. He looked forward to his vacation seasons with all the enthusiasm of a boy. He reveled in everything that God had made. The mountains, the skies, the forest, and especially the sea, appealed to him, and wherever he turned he found God. He was intensely devotional, and for years it was his habit to rise early in the morning and spend an hour before breakfast in prayer and meditation. In the summer-time, when he came close to the heart of nature, he felt in a peculiar way the glory of the Lord. It was in an hour of recreation that he penned the lines entitled, "Worship," which so fully reveal the soul of the man. This poem is not yet sung, but it merits a place among the choice hymns of American writers:

"When the great sun sinks to his rest,
His golden glories thrilling me,
And voiceless longings stir my breast,
Then teach me, Lord, to worship thee.

[1] From "Thoughts for Every-Day Living"; copyright, 1901, by Charles Scribner's Sons.

"And when the stars—the daylight fled—
In serried, shining ranks, I see,
Filling the splendid vault o'erhead,
Then teach me, Lord, to worship thee.

"If roaming by the ocean's shore,
The murmuring waves sing low to me,
Or thundering billows hoarsely roar,
Then teach me, Lord, to worship thee.

"Or if in solemn forest shades,
The calm of nature steals o'er me,
And silence all my soul pervades,
Then teach me, Lord, to worship thee.

"Not in the sacred shrines alone,
Which chime their summons unto me,
Would I look to thy heavenly throne,
But *everywhere* would worship thee."[1]

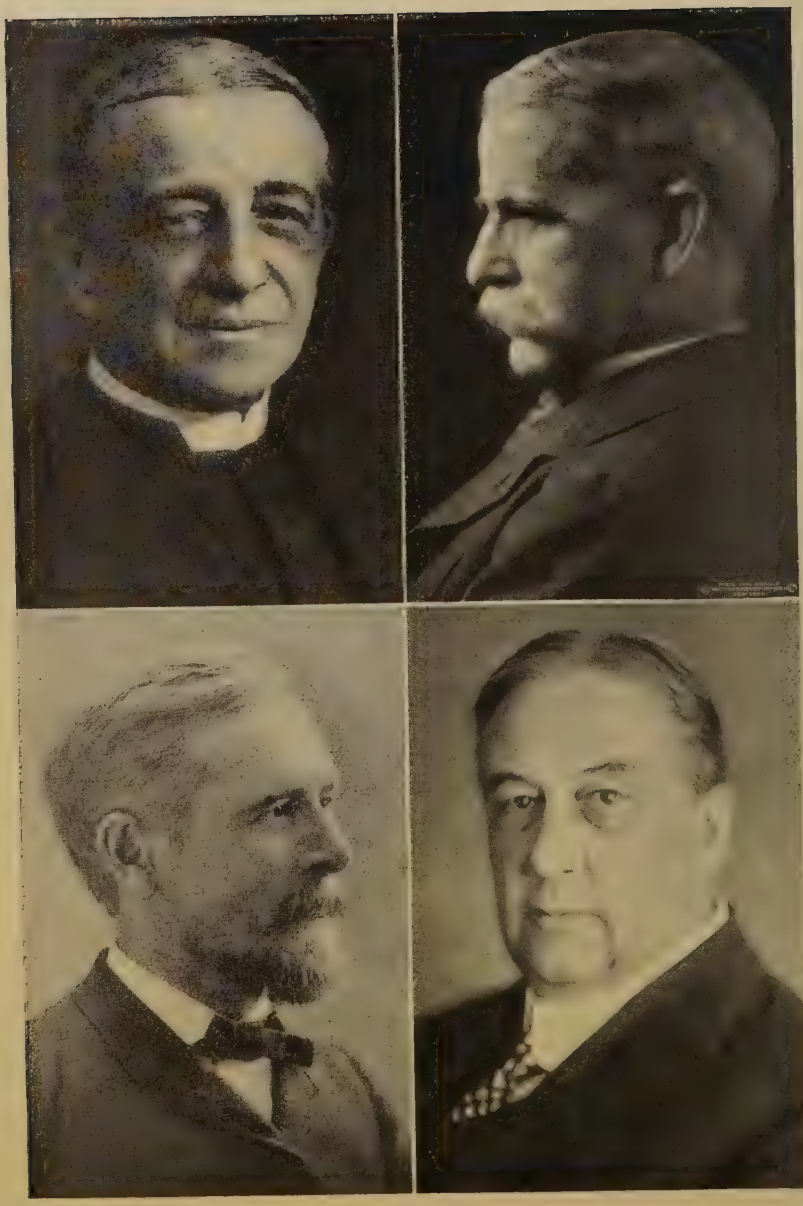
Ernest Warburton Shurtleff
1862–1917

"Lead on, O King Eternal,
The day of march has come;
Henceforth in fields of conquest
Thy tents shall be our home.
Through days of preparation
Thy grace has made us strong,
And now, O King Eternal,
We lift our battle song."

The young men who graduated from Andover Theological Seminary in 1887 were well acquainted with the poetic gifts of their classmate,

[1] From "Thoughts for Every-Day Living"; copyright, 1901, by Charles Scribner's Sons.

Ernest W. Shurtleff; he was already the author of two volumes of poems. They therefore asked him to write a hymn which they could sing together before they parted. The noble poem of which the above is the opening stanza was the response he made, and it is the best lyric he ever wrote. Indeed, it is worthy to take a place with the finest hymns in our language expressive of the militant spirit of the Christian life. When sung to a martial air, it has all the ring of a conquering faith. Mr. Shurtleff was born in Boston in 1862, and entered the Congregational ministry at the age of twenty-seven. After several pastorates in this country, he went to Paris in 1906, where he had charge of the Students' Atelier Reunions, until his death in 1917.



LOUIS FITZGERALD BENSON
FREDERICK LUCIAN HOSMER
HENRY VAN DYKE
FRANK MASON NORTH

CHAPTER XXIII

HOSMER, NORTH, VAN DYKE, BENSON, STRYKER, COPELAND

Frederick Lucian Hosmer

1840–

It is only within the last few years that Dr. Hosmer's poems have to any extent found their way into our hymnals, and even yet their exceptional merits are not fully appreciated. More than a decade ago Dr. Julian, the eminent hymnologist, made the statement: "Amongst Unitarian hymn writers of the last twenty years Mr. Hosmer is the most powerful and original known to us;" and certainly no one has arisen in the meantime to endanger his supremacy.

Dr. Hosmer was born at Framingham, Massachusetts, in 1840, and after receiving his education he entered the Unitarian ministry, serving as the pastor of several churches in the middle West. From his boyhood he had a strong poetical bent, but unlike so many others referred to in this Story, he wrote very few hymns before he was forty years of age. All the more interest therefore attaches to the little poem, "The Mystery of

God," composed in 1876, one of the earliest from his pen, and one of the best:

"O Thou, in all thy might so far,
In all thy love so near,
Beyond the range of sun and star,
And yet beside us here,—

"What heart can comprehend thy name,
Or, searching, find thee out,
Who art within, a quickening flame,
A presence round about?

"Yet though I know thee but in part,
I ask not, Lord, for more:
Enough for me to know thou art,
To love thee and adore.

"O sweeter than aught else besides,
The tender mystery
That like a veil of shadow hides
The light I may not see!

"And dearer than all things I know
Is childlike faith to me,
That makes the darkest way I go
An open path to thee."

As a prayer of simple childlike faith, love for God, yearning to be near him, and yet reverently content to bide his time for fuller knowledge, without prying into forbidden mysteries, this hymn has a peculiar charm.

A large number of Dr. Hosmer's compositions appeared in *The Thought of God in*

Hymns and Poems, which he and his friend Mr. E. C. Gannett brought out in a first series in 1885, and in a second series in 1894. Quite a group of these hymns are now in general use. One in particular deserves to be still better known. It is entitled "My Dead," and it must have been written out of the author's own experience. It is full of tender comfort for the hour of bereavement:

"I cannot think of them as dead
Who walk with me no more;
Along the path of life I tread
They have but gone before.

"The Father's house is mansioned fair
Beyond my vision dim;
All souls are his, and here, or there,
Are living unto him.

"And still their silent ministry
Within my heart hath place,
As when on earth they walked with me
And met me face to face.

"Their lives are made forever mine;
What they to me have been
Hath left henceforth its seal and sign
Engraven deep within.

"Mine are they by an ownership
Nor time nor death can free;
For God hath given to love to keep
Its own eternally."

Frank Mason North

1850–

Rev. Frank Mason North, D.D., is emphatically a son of the city. He was born in New York in 1850, and was educated there till he went to Wesleyan University, from which he graduated in the Class of '72. Entering the ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church, he held several pastorates in the New York and the New York East Conferences, until, in 1892, he was made Corresponding Secretary of the New York City Church Extension and Missionary Society. He occupied this position with distinguished success for twenty years, and, as during most of the time he was Corresponding Secretary of the National City Evangelization Union, his activities were nation-wide. At the General Conference of 1912 he was elected a Corresponding Secretary of the Methodist Episcopal Board of Foreign Missions. From 1916 to 1920, the full term, he was President of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America.

In 1884 Dr. North wrote a very beautiful "Hymn of Trust," which has found its way into a number of books. It opens with the lines:

"Jesus, the calm that fills my breast,
No other heart than thine can give;
This peace unstirred, this joy of rest,
None but thy loved ones can receive."

It was in 1905 that Dr. North gave to the world that really great hymn, "Where cross the crowded ways of life." Nothing in the hymnody of the Christian Church voices more appealingly the yearning of the Master after the thronging multitudes and the human response to that yearning, nothing more truly expresses the ardent spirit of social service which is animating the church in this new age than these noble stanzas. Responding to a request from the author, Dr. North very kindly tells how he came to write the hymn:

"My life was for long years, both by personal choice and official duty, given to the people in all phases of their community life. New York was to me an open book. I spent days and weeks and years in close contact with every phase of the life of the multitudes, and at the morning, noon, and evening hours was familiar with the tragedy, as it always seemed to me, of the jostling, moving currents of the life of the people as revealed upon the streets and at great crossings of the avenues; and I have watched them by the hour as they passed, by tens of thousands. This is no more than many another man whose sympathies are with the crowd and with the eager, unsatisfied folk of the world, has done.

"As I recall it, I came to write the hymn itself at the suggestion of Professor C. T. Winchester,

who, as a member of the committee on the new hymnal, was struggling with the fact that we have so few modern missionary hymns. He said to me one day, 'Why do you not write us a missionary hymn?' I wrote what was in my thought and feeling; it was published first, if I am not mistaken, in *The Christian City,* and was passed on into the hands of the Hymnal Committee. . . . That it has found its way into so many of the modern hymnals and by translation into so many of the other languages, is significant not as to the quality of the hymn itself but as to the fact that it is an expression of that tremendous movement of the soul of the gospel in our times which demands that the follower of Christ must make the interest of the people his own, and must find the heart of the world's need if he is in any real way to represent his Master among men."

"Where cross the crowded ways of life,
Where sound the cries of race and clan,
Above the noise of selfish strife,
We hear thy voice, O Son of man!

"In haunts of wretchedness and need,
On shadowed thresholds dark with fears,
From paths where hide the lures of greed,
We catch the vision of thy tears.

"From tender childhood's helplessness,
From woman's grief, man's burdened toil,
From famished souls, from sorrow's stress,
Thy heart has never known recoil.

"The cup of water given for thee
Still holds the freshness of thy grace;
Yet long these multitudes to see
The sweet compassion of thy face.

"O Master, from the mountain-side,
Make haste to heal these hearts of pain,
Among these restless throngs abide,
O tread the city's streets again,

"Till sons of men shall learn thy love
And follow where thy feet have trod;
Till glorious from thy heaven above
Shall come the city of our God."

Henry van Dyke

1852–

Dr. van Dyke is so well known by reason of his eminent place in the world of letters and diplomacy, that only the briefest personal reference is called for in this connection. He was born in Germantown, Philadelphia, in 1852, and graduated from Princeton in the Class of '73. As a Presbyterian minister he was pastor of the Brick Church in New York City for seventeen years; then from 1900 to 1913 he was professor of English Literature at his Alma Mater. Following this he served as United States Minister to the Netherlands.

He has been a voluminous writer of both prose and poetry, and his books have had a world-wide circulation. A number of his poems are admirably adapted to congregational singing,

and would enrich any hymnal; such a poem, for example, as the one emphasizing the nobility of toil, opening with the lines:

"Jesus, thou divine Companion,
By thy lowly human birth
Thou hast come to join the workers,
Burden-bearers of the earth;"

or this fine National Hymn, beginning:

"O Lord, our God, thy mighty hand
Hath made our country free;
From all her broad and happy land
May worship rise to thee.
Fulfill the promise of her youth,
Her liberty defend;
By law and order, love and truth,
America befriend!"

Most of Dr. van Dyke's hymns are of comparatively recent date, which accounts for the fact that but few of them are in use; but in the coming hymnals he will be well represented. For purity of literary style, combined with that devotional spirit which is the very essence of a good hymn, he stands high. His "Hymn to Joy," written in 1907, is one of his best. Note the steady rising of the thought; listen to the exultant strain of music in verse after verse; it is a hymn that sings itself:

"Joyful, joyful, we adore thee,
God of glory, Lord of love;
Hearts unfold like flowers before thee,
Opening to the sun above.

Melt the clouds of sin and sadness,
Drive the dark of doubt away,
Giver of immortal gladness,
Fill us with the light of day.

"All thy works with joy surround thee,
Earth and heaven reflect thy rays,
Stars and angels sing around thee,
Center of unbroken praise.
Field and forest, vale and mountain,
Flowery meadow, flashing sea,
Chanting bird and flowing fountain,
Call us to rejoice in thee.

"Thou art giving and forgiving,
Ever blessing, ever blest,
Well-spring of the joy of living,
Ocean-depth of happy rest!
Thou our Father, Christ our Brother,—
All who live in love are thine;
Teach us how to love each other,
Lift us to the Joy Divine.

"Mortals, join the mighty chorus
Which the morning stars began;
Father-love is reigning o'er us,
Brother-love binds man to man.
Ever singing, march we onward,
Victor in the midst of strife,
Joyful music leads us Sunward
In the triumph-song of life."

Louis FitzGerald Benson

1855–

Dr. Benson was born in Philadelphia in 1855, and graduated from the University of Pennsylvania at the age of nineteen. He followed law

for several years and then turned to the Christian ministry. He was pastor of the Presbyterian Church of the Redeemer in Germantown from 1888 to 1894, when he resigned to devote himself to literary and church work in Philadelphia. He has edited a number of hymn books, authorized for use by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, in particular *The Hymnal,* 1895, and the same book, *Revised,* 1911. This last is in every way a model of editorial skill and judgment.

Dr. Benson is our leading American authority on hymnology. He has written and lectured extensively on the subject, and his hymnological library of 8,000 volumes is by far the largest and the most valuable in the country. He has also written hymns of his own which promise to grow in favor as they become better known. Not only are they devotional and of literary merit, but they have a practical appeal, and they breathe the spirit of the times in which we live. Such a hymn is the one that follows:

"The light of God is falling
  Upon life's common way;
The Master's voice still calling,
  'Come walk with me to-day':
No duty can seem lowly
  To him who lives with thee,
And all of life grows holy,
  O Christ of Galilee.

"Who shares his life's pure pleasures,
And walks the honest road,
Who trades with heaping measures,
And lifts his brother's load,
Who turns the wrong down bluntly,
And lends the right a hand;
He dwells in God's own country,
He tills the Holy Land.

"Where human lives are thronging
In toil and pain and sin,
While cloistered hearts are longing
To bring the kingdom in,
O Christ, the Elder Brother
Of proud and beaten men,
When they have found each other,
Thy kingdom will come then.

"Thy ransomed host in glory,
All souls that sin and pray,
Turn toward the cross that bore thee;
'Behold the man!' they say:
And while thy church is pleading
For all who would do good,
We hear thy true voice leading
Our song of brotherhood."

Melancthon Woolsey Stryker

1851–

For many years Dr. Stryker has been known as a leader in the world of higher education, as a public speaker of unusual power, and as an enthusiastic student of hymnology. While his work in this last field has been in the nature of a

"side-light," he has given to it much of his most earnest thought. He was born in Vernon, New York, in 1851, and graduated from Hamilton College at the age of twenty-one. Entering the Presbyterian ministry, he served several churches, until, in 1892, he was called from a distinguished pastorate in Chicago to the presidency of his Alma Mater. From this position he retired in 1917, after rounding out a full quarter of a century.

He has written many hymns, most of which have appeared at different dates in hymn-books which he has compiled. His *College Hymnal,* which came out while he was at Hamilton, contains many pieces especially adapted to student life. One of them, beginning with the lines:

> "Almighty Lord, with one accord,
> We offer thee our youth,"

has passed into more general use. But Dr. Stryker's hymns, while admittedly "massive and rugged" and "full of fire," are not as yet widely known. One that has received special and well-merited commendation is the following, entitled "Image of the Invisible":

> "From doubt and all its sullen pain,
> From every wide, uncertain quest,
> My mind, O Christ, comes back again,
> In thee, the Word of God, to rest.

"My laden conscience knows thy voice,
In thee my reasonings end their strife,
Thou strangely dost my heart rejoice;
Where else is Way or Truth or Life?

"My Hope! in whom all fullness dwells,
Thy words those many mansions show
Where love shall find what faith foretells—
Thou wouldst have told were it not so!

"Thou canst not disappoint the trust
That seeks its answers all in thee;
Because thou wert the holy, just
And good—and must forever be.

"Head over all things to thy church,
Messiah, Mediator, King!
In whom we cease our utmost search,
Unquestioned and unquestioning;

"Because we do in God believe
We also do believe in thee
And all thine own would thee receive,
Our Life and Light eternally.

"O blessèd and enduring Rock,
Who builds on thee shall never fall!
O shepherd of one only flock,
Beyond all fear enfold us all!"

Benjamin Copeland

1855–

Rev. Benjamin Copeland, D.D., was born in 1855, and for many years has been a member of the Genesee Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church. He has written a number of sa-

cred poems, two of which are included in the Methodist Hymnal. His Thanksgiving Day hymn, beginning,

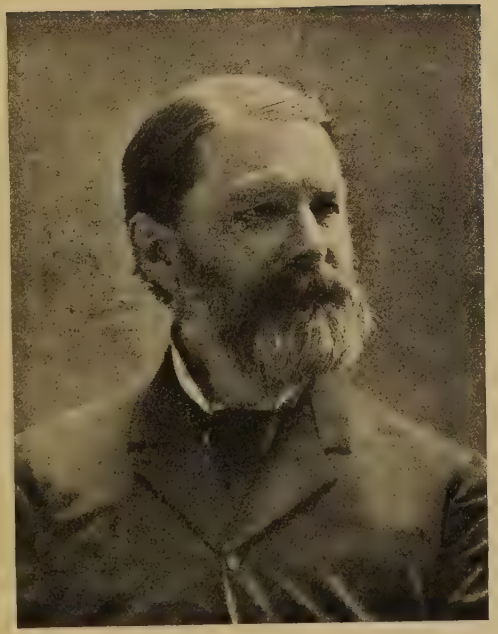
> "Our fathers' God, to thee we raise,
> In cheerful song, our grateful praise;
> From shore to shore the anthems rise;
> Accept a nation's sacrifice,"

is admirably adapted to the occasion for which it was intended.

The second of the hymns just referred to, expresses the glad loyalty of the Christian heart to the life and leadership of the Master:

> "Christ's life our code, his cross our creed,
> Our common, glad confession be;
> Our deepest wants, our highest aims,
> Find their fulfillment, Lord, in thee.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> "Thy life our code! in letters clear
> We read our duty, day by day,
> Thy footsteps tracing eagerly,
> Who art the Truth, the Life, the Way.
>
> "Thy cross our creed! thy boundless love
> A ransomed world at last shall laud,
> And crown thee their eternal King,
> O Lord of Glory, Lamb of God."

PHILIP PAUL BLISS



ROBERT LOWRY

ELLEN HUNTINGTON GATES

CHAPTER XXIV

SOME GOSPEL SINGERS AND THEIR SONGS

It is not a part of our *Story* to discuss the difference between a hymn of the standard type and one of the gospel variety; or to take up the mooted question as to the place and value of the Gospel Song in church worship. We shall simply tell how the new song movement came about, and speak of several of those who have been prominent in its development.

It was but natural that the Gospel Song should be born in America, with its western freedom from many of the old-world conventionalities—this home of so many new ideas and methods. The stirring revival hymns of the early camp meeting days; the flood of Sunday school songs with their fetching melodies, that began two generations and more ago; the coming of the Young Men's Christian Association in the fifties, with the enthusiastic singing by crowds of men of songs new and old; the civil war and the soldiers' love for sacred songs of a lighter vein, with melodies that sang themselves and had plenty of "go" in them; the influence of a singing-evangelist like Philip Phillips, who went everywhere

thrilling audiences with his soul-stirring lyrics—all this and more lay behind the larger and definite movement which we associate with Moody and Sankey.

The two evangelists went to England on their first mission in the summer of 1873. For a time they used Philip Phillips' book, *Hallowed Songs,* in the meetings. These were supplemented by hymns which Mr. Sankey had in his private collection, and which became so popular that an insistent call came for their publication. They were finally issued in a pamphlet of sixteen pages, with the title, *Sacred Songs and Solos.* In the meantime, while Moody and Sankey were in England, Major D. W. Whittle was carrying on evangelistic work in America, with P. P. Bliss to assist him in song. They got out a small book of hymns and tunes under the title of *Gospel Songs,* most of them by Mr. Bliss. On the return of Moody and Sankey it was decided to unite the two collections, the new book bearing the name that has grown so familiar, *Gospel Hymns and Sacred Songs.* This original volume was so popular that a second one of like character was published, and finally a series of six was issued.

Philip Paul Bliss

As we open "Number One," the original book, at every turn of the page we are reminded of

P. P. Bliss, for his spirit permeates the whole collection. Mr. Bliss was born at Rome, Pennsylvania, in 1838, and was brought up by devoted Christian parents. He was passionately fond of music; they used to say of him that "he loved music like a bird." In 1864 he went to Chicago and became associated with the music house of Root and Cady, conducting musical institutes and composing Sunday school melodies. In 1874 he joined Major Whittle in evangelistic work, meeting with great success. He was a man of splendid physique, "one of the handsomest men I ever met," said Dr. John H. Vincent. He had a deep bass voice of wonderful compass and pathos, yet with all his strength he possessed the delicate feeling and tenderness of a woman. He combined in a very unusual way magnetic power as a singer with the ability to write the most popular gospel songs, both words and music.

His best work was not accomplished by deliberate study but during flashes of inspiration. Very often an entire hymn, theme, general structure of the words, and the melody, would be born in his mind at the same time. He was always on the alert. A passing incident, a story that he chanced to hear or read, would suggest a theme for a song. A vessel was wrecked and was rapidly going to pieces. The captain ordered the crew to leave everything, to leap into the lifeboat

and "pull for the shore." Mr. Bliss read of it and at once wrote his well-known song. He heard the English evangelist, Henry Moorhouse, preach for seven nights in succession from the familiar words in John 3. 16, and was so moved that he wrote, "Whosoever heareth, shout, shout the sound." One evening he was talking with a friend about "Gates Ajar," and he went home to write out, "I know not the hour when my Lord will come."

He listened to a sermon which closed with the words, "He who is almost persuaded is almost saved, but to be almost saved is to be entirely lost," and then he wrote, "Almost Persuaded," which is said to have brought more souls to Christ than any other song he ever composed. One morning, in his own home, as he was passing through the hall, there suddenly came to him the outline of a new song, both words and music, and presently "The Light of the World is Jesus" was upon paper. In 1870 he heard Major Whittle tell the story of how the military signal was flashed to the beleaguered garrison at Allatoona Pass to "Hold the fort," and that moment his most famous song was born in his heart. "Let the Lower Lights be burning," with its appealing melody, has also been a great favorite. When the Columbus Glee Club visited the White House during the presidency of Rutherford B.

Hayes, this piece was sung at the special request of Mrs. Hayes. Mr. Sankey tells us that when he and Mr. Moody began their work in England, the first of the songs by Mr. Bliss that became popular was, "Jesus loves even me," and "more than any other hymn, it became the keynote of our meetings." Bishop John H. Vincent was very fond of it, and once said, "If there is only one song of his that remains it will be that one."

In 1876 Mr. and Mrs. Bliss made a Christmas visit to the old home at Rome. On their way back to Chicago, on Friday evening, December 29, through the collapse of a bridge they were crossing near Ashtabula, Ohio, their train was precipitated to the stream below. The wreckage at once caught fire. Mr. Bliss escaped through a window, but crawled back to try to rescue his wife. This was the last that was seen of him. Both utterly perished in the flames. A beautiful monument was erected to his memory in the Rome cemetery, but his work in Gospel Song is his real and enduring memorial.

Annie Sherwood Hawks

We are indebted to Mrs. Hawks for that beautiful hymn which voices the deepest feeling of the soul, "I need Thee every hour." She was born in Hoosick, New York, in 1835, and began writ-

ing poems for the newspapers when she was only fourteen, and she continued to use her pen through most of her life. Following her marriage in 1859, she moved to Brooklyn and united with the Hanson Place Baptist Church. Soon afterward, Dr. Robert Lowry became the pastor, and when he learned of Mrs. Hawks' poetic gift he urged her to write hymns. She did so and he set several of them to music.

In her old age she told how her best-known hymn came to be written. "I remember well the morning, many years ago (1872), when in the midst of the daily cares of my home, I was so filled with a sense of nearness to my Master that, wondering how one could live without him either in joy or pain, these words, 'I need Thee every hour,' were flashed into my mind. Seating myself by the open window in the balmy air of the bright June day, I caught up my pencil and the words were soon committed to paper, almost as they are being sung now. It was only accident, as it would seem, that they were set to music a few months later, and sung for the first time at a Sunday school convention held in one of the large Western cities. From there they were taken farther west and sung by thousands of voices before the echo came back to me. I did not understand at first why it touched the great throbbing heart of humanity. It was not until

long years after, when the shadow fell over my way, the shadow of a great loss, that I understood something of the comforting power in the words which I had been permitted to give out to others in my hours of sweet security and peace."

The music for the hymn was written by Dr. Lowry, and he also added the refrain. After the death of her husband, in 1888, Mrs. Hawks lived with her daughter, in Bennington, Vermont, where she spent a tranquil old age, passing away at the dawn of 1918.

Robert Lowry

We know Dr. Lowry so well as the author of "Shall we gather at the river?" and other songs, and as the composer of favorite gospel melodies, that we often forget that for many years he was a leader in the Christian ministry. Born in Philadelphia in 1826, and graduating from Bucknell University with valedictory honors, he served as the pastor of a number of Baptist churches, including the Hanson Place Church in Brooklyn. As a child he was very fond of music, and the love for it grew with him as the years passed. Late in the sixties the music firm of Biglow and Main urged him to prepare a book for the use of Sunday schools. He did so, and it became the first in a long and remarkable series. Of *Bright Jewels* a half million copies were sold in

four years, and more than twice that number of *Pure Gold.*

He was a prolific tune-writer. "I need Thee every hour," "The mistakes of my life have been many," "All the way my Saviour leads me," "Saviour, thy dying love," "One more day's work for Jesus," "We're marching to Zion," and a host of other hymns are sung to his melodies. Dr. Lowry also wrote a number of well-known Gospel Songs, including, "Weeping will not save me," and "Where is my wandering boy to-night?" But the one that is loved best is, "Shall we gather at the river?" We cannot do better than tell the story of how it came to be written, in Dr. Lowry's own words: "One afternoon in July, 1864, when I was pastor at Hanson Place Baptist Church, Brooklyn, the weather was oppressively hot, and I was lying on a lounge in a state of physical exhaustion. I was almost incapable of bodily exertion, and my imagination began to take to itself wings. Visions of the future passed before me with startling vividness. The imagery of the apocalypse took the form of a tableau. Brightest of all were the throne, the heavenly river, and the gathering of the saints. My soul seemed to take new life from that celestial outlook. I began to wonder why the hymn-writers had said so much about the 'river of death,' and so little about 'the pure water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out

of the throne of God and of the Lamb.' As I mused the words began to construct themselves. They came first as a question of Christian inquiry, 'Shall we gather?' Then they broke out in chorus, as an answer of Christian faith, 'Yes, we'll gather.' On this question and answer the hymn developed itself. The music came with the hymn."

Soon the new song became known. The following spring, the Brooklyn Sunday School Union asked permission to use it for the May anniversary, and forty thousand children sang it on parade and in their churches. Then it went everywhere till it girdled the earth. The closing years of Dr. Lowry's life were spent at Plainfield, New Jersey, and there he died, on the eve of Thanksgiving Day, November 25, 1899.

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Ellen Huntington Gates

We are indebted to Mrs. Gates for several of our best-loved songs. One stormy afternoon in the winter of 1860-61, she sat near the window watching the whirling snow, when she fell to musing, and scarcely realizing what she was doing, she began to write the lines of a poem on her slate. "It wrote itself," she afterward said. She went on till there were six stanzas, and when she read them over she was pleased with them. "I knew, as I know now, that the poem was only a

simple little thing; but somehow I had a presentiment that it had wings, and would fly into sorrowful hearts, uplifting and strengthening them." It appeared in two or three newspapers, and was then set to music by Sidney M. Grannis and published. As the war was drawing to a close, on February 29, 1865, a great meeting of the United States Christian Commission was held in the Hall of Representatives at Washington. Secretary Seward was in the chair and the place was crowded with a most distinguished company, including President Lincoln. During the exercises Philip Phillips was called on to sing, and he rendered this ballad by Mrs. Gates. It was new, the people had never heard it before, and it made a profound impression:

"If you cannot on the ocean
Sail among the swiftest fleet;
Rocking on the highest billows,
Laughing at the storms you meet,
You can stand among the sailors
Anchored yet within the bay;
You can lend a hand to help them
As they launch their boats away."

The horrors of battle came before the listeners as the singer went on:

"If you cannot in the conflict
Prove yourself a soldier true,
If where fire and smoke are thickest
There's no work for you to do;

When the battlefield is silent
You can go with careful tread;
You can bear away the wounded,
You can cover up the dead."

The touching appeal of the poem itself, the rare beauty of the voice that sang it, and the whole occasion, conspired to move every heart. Mr. Lincoln was overcome with emotion. He wrote on a slip of paper and sent it up to the chairman, "Near the close let us have 'Your Mission' repeated by Mr. Phillips. Don't say I called for it." Presently Mr. Seward announced that the piece would be sung again, and, feeling free to disregard the President's caution, he added that it was at Mr. Lincoln's request. We can well understand the breathless interest with which the ballad was listened to for the second time. A few weeks later the noble Chieftain lay dead; his "favorite song" will be tenderly cherished through all the years.

In 1865, while preparing his song-book which became so famous, *The Singing Pilgrim,* Mr. Phillips asked Mrs. Gates to contribute a song in the spirit of Bunyan's description of the joy of the Christian as he steps forth on the celestial shore. Her response was the touching hymn, "The Home of the Soul." Mr. Phillips was greatly pleased with it, and he never wrote a sweeter and more appropriate melody than the

one composed for these words. The piece was afterward sung at the funeral of his own little boy, and it has been a source of comfort to unnumbered multitudes of hearts. Mrs. Gates also wrote that tenderly impressive poem, "O the clanging bells of time."

Sanford Fillmore Bennett and Joseph P. Webster

were united in giving us "In the Sweet By-and-By," Bennett writing the words and Webster composing the melody. The two men were close friends and for some time they had worked together in publishing songs in sheet music form. Mr. Webster, like so many musicians, was of a nervous, sensitive nature, and subject to periods of great depression. One day he came into Bennett's drugstore, and stood, with his back to the stove, in dead silence. At a glance Bennett saw he was in one of his melancholy moods. "Well, Webster, what's the matter now?" "It's no matter," was the reply, "It will be all right By and By."

The idea of a song flashed into the mind of Bennett. "'The Sweet By and By!' Why would not that make a good hymn?" "May be it would," said Webster, indifferently. Turning to his desk, Bennett began to write, swiftly, line after line. Then he sprang up and handed the

sheet to his partner. With kindling eye Webster read it; his depression was gone in an instant, and he in turn, pen in hand, started on a tune. As soon as he had jotted down the notes, he played the melody with his violin. In the meantime a couple of friends had dropped in, and within thirty minutes of the time that Bennett began writing, the four men were singing the completed song. A third friend entered as they were singing, and when they were done, he exclaimed, with tears in his eyes, "That hymn is immortal." Whether immortal or not, it certainly has won a popularity that very few songs have attained. In later years Mr. Bennett studied medicine, and practiced in Richmond, Illinois, where he died in 1898.

Lydia Baxter

Mrs. Lydia Baxter, who wrote, "Take the name of Jesus with you," and other familiar hymns, was born at Petersburgh, New York, in 1809. Her conversion and that of a sister were followed by the organization of a Baptist Church in her native town. On her marriage she moved to New York City, but she carried her intense religious experience with her. It was not long before she led her husband to Christ, and on through the years, till her death in 1874, her home was a center of Christian influence. She was an invalid and confined to her bed much of the time,

but she managed to keep active in the King's business. Pastors, Sunday school workers, missionaries, and colporteurs were wont to meet with her to discuss the affairs of the Kingdom.

She wrote a number of gospel songs, including the one noted above, and, "There is a gate that stands ajar." Many years ago the Sunday School Times told a touching incident concerning the influence of this last-named song. Among those who were converted during the revival meetings held by Moody and Sankey at Edinburgh in the winter of 1873-74 was a young Scotch girl by the name of Maggie Lindsay. Her home was in Aberdeen, and it was while she was visiting friends in the capital that the great blessing came to her. Her newfound joy was deep and intense, and nothing that she had heard seemed to have impressed her more than the words of the hymn, "There is a gate that stands ajar." On the morning of January 28, 1874, she boarded the train to return to Aberdeen. "A fearful railroad collision took place. Maggie was left for several hours lying on the bank. She was at last taken up and removed to a cottage near by. It was supposed she was reading her much-loved hymn, as the leaf was turned down at the words, 'The gate ajar for me,' and the pages of the book were stained with her own heart's blood. Lying on that stretcher, with both

limbs broken, a fractured skull, and other internal injuries, she could yet sing with bleeding lips the hymn,

'Oh, depth of mercy, can it be
That gate stands open wide for me?'

'For me! for me! for me!' she sang plaintively, to the uncontrollable emotion of those who were beside her." These were her last words, for in a few brief moments the gates opened wide and Maggie passed into the City of the Great King.

In the company of gospel singers have been two Methodist ministers, each of whom has given us a beautiful and helpful song. Rev. John Hart Stockton was born in 1813 and died in 1877. He was a member of the New Jersey Annual Conference, and in addition to being a good preacher and pastor, he wrote hymns and composed tunes, and not long before his death he published two gospel songbooks. During his first voyage to England, in 1873, in looking through his scrapbook, Mr. Sankey found a hymn by Mr. Stockton, beginning,

"Come, every soul by sin oppressed,
There's mercy with the Lord."

The refrain ran,

"Come to Jesus, come to Jesus,
Come to Jesus just now."

The hymn itself he liked, but he thought the refrain hackneyed, and so he changed it to, "Only trust him," and in this form the piece has been used ever since.

Rev. William McDonald, who gave us that familiar hymn of spiritual surrender,

> "I am coming to the cross;
> I am poor, and weak, and blind;
> I am counting all but dross,
> I shall full salvation find,"

was born in 1820 and lived to be eighty-one years of age. He entered the Methodist ministry, serving as the pastor of several churches, editing the *Christian Witness,* for some years, and also engaging extensively in evangelistic work. He is especially remembered as one of the leaders in the National Holiness Association. The hymn referred to was written in 1870, while Dr. McDonald was pastor in Brooklyn, and it grew out of a need which he felt "of a hymn to aid seekers of heart-purity while at the altar." Its simplicity and its soulful voicing of an earnest desire for all the fullness of divine grace have given it widespread usefulness.

In his autobiography, written toward the close of life, when blind and broken in health and patiently waiting for the end, Mr. Ira D. Sankey mentioned what he called "My three latest favorite songs, 'Hiding in Thee,' 'There'll be no Dark

Valley,' and 'Saved by Grace.'" The words of the first two were by his friend, Rev. William O. Cushing, who wrote a number of well-known gospel songs. The one beginning, "O safe to the Rock that is higher than I," "was written in Moravia, New York, in 1876," so we are told by the author. "It was the outgrowth of many tears, many heart conflicts and soul yearnings, of which the world can know nothing. The history of many battles is behind it." "Ring the bells of heaven! there is joy to-day" was written by Mr. Cushing "to fit a beautiful tune" sent him by the composer, George F. Root. "After receiving it, the melody ran in my head all day long, chiming and flowing in its sweet musical cadence." And then the words of the song came to him as from heaven.

In the winter of 1863-64, the city of Newark, New Jersey, was deeply stirred by a great revival. The place of meeting was thronged day after day. At one of the services the sermon was from the words, "They told him that Jesus of Nazareth passeth by." Among those present was a school-teacher, Miss Emma Campbell, who was moved to write the familiar song based on this text. It was one of a small collection of songs in scrapbook form which Sankey took with him when he and Moody went to England in 1873. Sankey made very frequent use of it as a

solo, especially during the opening months of the campaign, and at that time it was the most effective song he had. When the evangelists began work in Edinburgh where many of the people were strongly opposed to the singing of anything but psalms in church, Mr. Sankey took the precaution to bring this song on for his first solo. Its strong scriptural flavor helped to disarm prejudice and to open the way for the singing of other hymns of "human composure." Some years later, Dr. Andrew A. Bonar wrote: "Had you been in Edinburgh during the four months when these brethren [Moody and Sankey] were there in 1873, you would have seen multitudes of all ages and stations hastening to the place of meeting, at whatever hour, any day of the week. The scene was exactly that described in the hymn, so often sung and so much blessed:

> 'What means this eager, anxious throng,
> Which moves with busy haste along;
> These wondrous gatherings day by day?
> What means this strange commotion, pray?' "

Dr. H. R. Palmer, who furnished the music for "Master, the tempest is raging," once told the writer how the song came to be composed. Its author, Miss Mary A. Baker, her sister and their only brother, were living together in Chicago. Suddenly the brother's health began to fail; it was consumption, the dread disease of which both

parents had died. The doctor said that if he could go to a warmer climate, he might possibly recover. The family were in humble circumstances, but without a moment's hesitation the sisters united their savings and sent the brother to Florida. For a time he improved, and then came a change for the worse, and one day the sad message was flashed over the wires that he had died. The sisters were heartbroken, and what added immeasurably to their grief was the fact that they could not bring the body home. Their meager resources were exhausted. They had been unable to go south to minister to him in his sickness and now he must rest in a lonely grave.

Mary's faith broke under the strain; she felt that God was cruel and she would pray to him no more. It was a time of utter spiritual darkness. But though she knew it not, the Comforter was with her, the Everlasting Arms were underneath and round about her. The storm passed, her faith revived, and a wonderful peace filled her soul. Out of her own experience she wrote this song, eager to comfort those who were in trouble, by the comfort wherewith she herself had been comforted of God:

"Master, the tempest is raging!
The billows are tossing high!
The sky is o'ershadowed with blackness,
No shelter or help is nigh;

'Carest thou not that we perish?'
How can'st thou lie asleep,
When each moment so madly is threat'ning
A grave in the angry deep?

"Master, with anguish of spirit
I bow in my grief to-day;
The depths of my sad heart are troubled—
Oh, waken and save, I pray!
Torrents of sin and of anguish
Sweep o'er my sinking soul;
And I perish! I perish! dear Master—
Oh, hasten, and take control!

"Master, the terror is over,
The elements sweetly rest;
Earth's sun in the calm lake is mirrored,
And heaven's within my breast;
Linger, O blessed Redeemer!
Leave me alone no more;
And with joy I shall make the blest harbor,
And rest on the blissful shore."

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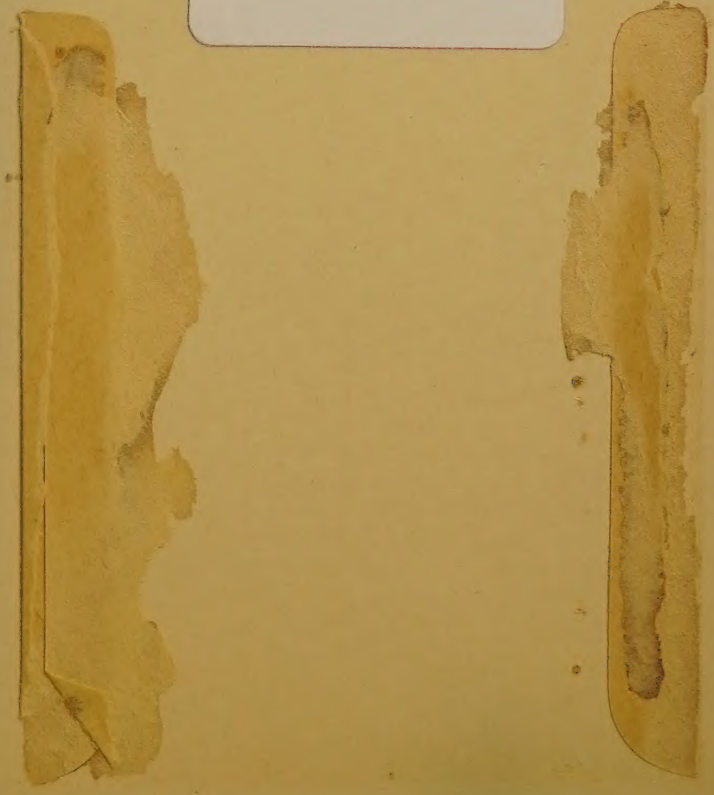

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